

THE PROBLEMATIC OF DISCIPLE-MAKING  
IN THE HAITIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

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BY  
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To my precious wife, Josette  
and our two daughters, Anne-Michelle and Christine

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## ABBREVIATIONS

DMC	Disciple-Making Church
DMIN	Doctor of Ministry
EC	Evangelical Church
GCTS	Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
HBI	Hindustan Bible Institute
NLT	New Life Translation
STEP	Séminaire de Théologie Evangélique de Port-au-Prince

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## ABSTRACT

Many denominations and churches have developed since the arrival of the Gospel in Haiti. However, the positive impact of the Haitian Evangelical Church (HEC) is limited given a shortage of disciple-making. Reflecting on the Great Commission, this thesis-project asked, "What are the obstacles preventing the HEC from becoming a disciple-making church?"

After identifying the problem of disciple-making in the HEC, considering the theology of disciple-making, and identifying obstacles and proposed solutions, the analysis led to the presentation of clarification points and elaboration of a plan to develop a disciple-making culture in the HEC through Evangelical seminaries and Bible schools.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

#### **Introduction**

At the end of the Earthly ministry of Jesus, before He returned to Heaven, He gave to His disciples what theologians call the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

This is the mission the disciples had and the mission of the church today. The main idea of the Great Commission is to make disciples, which will be done by going to places where there are lost people groups to evangelize them, baptize them, and teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded.

The church has done a lot of work in evangelism and baptism. In the Haitian context, the Gospel has been preached for over 200 years, and the number of evangelical Christians is significant. The number of members of Protestantism in Haiti have increased considerably. The teaching to obey aspect of the Great Commission has been addressed through sermons in the pulpits, Sunday school, Bible study, Bible conferences, youth groups, children's ministries, and the like. Though the expression "disciple-making" is widespread in the jargon of the Haitian Evangelical Church (HEC), the church activities are happening in the hopes that the churches will become spiritually mature and positively impact Haitian society, the expected transformative impact on Haitian society is still wanted.

## The Current State of Haiti

As a result of the slave revolt that began in 1791 A.D., Haiti became independent from the domination of France in January 1804.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, after over 200 years of independence, Haiti faces significant challenges that negatively impact society.

### Education in Haiti

Pertaining to education, Haiti places in the position number 142 out of over 162 countries considered by Index Mundi.<sup>2</sup> According to the report, Cuba—a country located less than 100 miles from Haiti—is 99.8% literate, while Haiti is 60.7%.<sup>3</sup> This happens even though the Haitian Constitution of 1987 requires free primary education for every child.<sup>4</sup> The objective of the educational reformation of 1982 was to adapt the educational system to the new economic situation.<sup>5</sup> The leaders who led the reformation at the time believed that the educational system had flaws at different levels,<sup>6</sup> including the quality of education.<sup>7</sup> Ten years after the reformation started, an evaluation report of The Research Triangle Institute and The

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<sup>1</sup> Act of Independence of Haiti.

<sup>2</sup> CIA World Factbook - Version of January 1, 2018.  
<https://www.indexmundi.com/g/r.aspx?c=ha&v=39&l=fr> (Accessed on March 25, 2018).

<sup>3</sup> CIA World Factbook.

<sup>4</sup> The Haitian Constitution, ARTICLE 32-1: Education is the responsibility of the State and its territorial divisions. They must make schooling available to all, free of charge, and ensure that public and private sector teachers are properly trained.

<sup>5</sup> Fritz Dorvilier, *La Crise Haïtienne du Développement: Essai d'Anthropologie Dynamique*. (Port-au-Prince: Editions de l'Université d'Etat d'Haiti, 2012), p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> Dorvilier, *La Crise*, p. 52.

<sup>7</sup> Dorvilier, *La Crise*, p. 55.

Academy for Education and Development indicated that close to one million children who were supposed to be in kindergarten were not attending school, either because there was no school available in their areas or they could not afford the high cost.<sup>8</sup> Fritz Dorvilier reported that, during the academic year 2001 and 2002, only 29.51 % of the total Haitian population between the ages of 5 and 59 went to school or university.<sup>9</sup> This data shows that the education system in Haiti is not ideal, despite the commitment of the country to providing education for all. Dorvilier calls it “an illusion.”<sup>10</sup>

### The Haitian Economy

The Haitian economy is known for being one of the worst on this side of the world. Haiti is one of the most impoverished nations in the Western hemisphere.<sup>11</sup> An article published by the World Bank in March 2023 reported that:

Haiti's economic and social development continues to be hindered by political instability, increasing violence, and unprecedented levels of insecurity, which exacerbate fragility. Haiti remains the poorest country in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region and among the poorest countries in the world. [...]

Amid the lingering political and institutional crisis, high vulnerability to natural hazards, coupled with violent gangs vying to gain control over business districts, the economy contracted for four consecutive years by 1.7% in 2019, 3.3% in 2020, 1.8% in 2021, and 1.7% in 2022.

In such a context, past gains in poverty reduction have been undone. While more recent data to measure poverty is unavailable, the lack of improvement in critical dimensions needed to reduce poverty negatively affected household incomes across the

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<sup>8</sup> Dorvilier, *La Crise*, p. 54.

<sup>9</sup> Dorvilier, *La Crise*, p. 68.

<sup>10</sup> Dorvilier, *La Crise*, p. 66.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.worldvision.org/disaster-relief-news-stories/haiti-crisis-faqs> (Accessed on November 16, 2023).

country. For example, by December 2021, 65% of households experienced a deterioration in their incomes compared to the years before the pandemic, indicating that an already high poverty rate has most likely risen. In line with these results, estimations done by the Bank's team show that in 2021, poverty likely increased to 87.6% (\$6.85/day), 58.7% (\$3.65/day), and 30.32% when using the extreme poverty line (\$2.15/day). Haiti is also among the countries with the greatest inequality in the region. This is largely due to two-thirds of the poor living in rural areas and the adverse conditions for agricultural production, creating a welfare gap between urban and rural areas.<sup>12</sup>

Exportation has decreased considerably while importation has increased.<sup>13</sup> World Vision indicates that “an estimated 5.2 million people in Haiti will need life-saving humanitarian aid in 2023, and the number of people living in extreme poverty continues to rise; 31% of the population makes less than \$2.15 per day.”<sup>14</sup>

### Healthcare in Haiti

Healthcare in Haiti is a luxury. The state hospitals offer inferior services, while the private ones, where healthcare could be slightly decent, are expensive. In an article published online by the Pan American Health Organization, it is reported that “In 2020, public expenditure on health accounted for 0.41% of gross domestic product (GDP) [...] and 4.1% of total public expenditure, while out-of-pocket spending on health accounted for 46.9% of total health

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<sup>12</sup> The World Bank in Haiti, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/haiti/overview> (Accessed on November 20, 2023).

<sup>13</sup> Haiti recorded a trade deficit of 95.39 USD million dollars in July of 2023. Balance of Trade in Haiti averaged -79.48 USD million dollars from 2008 until 2023, reaching an all-time high of -22.04 USD million dollars in October of 2019 and a record low of -222.42 USD million dollars in December of 2020. Source: Banque de la République d'Haïti, <https://tradingeconomics.com/haiti/balance-of-trade> (Accessed on November 20, 2023).

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.worldvision.org/disaster-relief-news-stories/haiti-crisis-faqs> (Accessed on November 16, 2023).

expenditure.”<sup>15</sup> Causes for this include the political upheavals that prevent the hospitals from providing services to the people, gang activity, the kidnapping of a physician that causes everything to come to a halt, the lack of healthcare materials, or the doctors are on strike for not receiving their meager salaries from the government. The following report from USAID captures it well,

Haiti’s health systems continue to face complex challenges, including the lack of governance and sector coordination; financial and geographical barriers to accessing health services; and shortages of healthcare workers and essential medicines. Despite some areas of progress, past marginal gains have been undone by the recent succession of crises, including country lockdown “peyi lok”, the COVID-19 pandemic, the assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, and natural shocks, such as the August 2021 earthquake. Consequently, Haiti’s health systems are working in the fray of protracted crises. Political unrest, social instability, gang violence, and recurrent fuel shortages have tested the ability of health systems in Haiti to adapt and find new ways to continue providing essential services, such as virtual platforms to complete follow-up visits and data collection.<sup>16</sup>

### The Socio-Political Atmosphere in Haiti

Since the year 2000, Haitian governments have started organizing election processes late. In the article “*Le Mandat de 10 Séateurs Est-il Arrivé à Terme?*”—“*Has the Term of 10 Senators Come to an End?*”—Lemoine Bonneau indicates that four different election processes in Haiti happened after the times they were supposed to take place.<sup>17</sup> Once again, during the presidency of Jovenel Moise, the same thing happened. The House was completely gone with

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<sup>15</sup> *Health in the Americas*, published by Pan American Health Organization. <https://hia.paho.org/en/countries-22/haiti-country-profile> (Accessed on January 1, 2024).

<sup>16</sup> *Health System Strengthening in Haiti*. <https://www.usaid.gov/haiti/fact-sheet/health-system-strengthening-haiti> (Accessed on November 20, 2023).

<sup>17</sup> “The elections of 2000, 2010, 2011 and 2015 were organized after the end of the mandate of elected officials at the territorial and legislative level.” Lemoine Bonneau, “*Le Mandat de 10 Séateurs Est-il Arrivé à Terme? Le Nouvelliste*, published online on December 1, 2017. (Accessed on January 1, 2024).

no newly elected representatives to replace them, two-thirds of the Senate were gone, and the mayors had finished their terms all over the country. Still, no election was organized to elect new officials to replace them. Concerning this situation, Luke Taylor, in the article "*Haiti Left with No Elected Government Officials as it Spirals Towards Anarchy*," writes that "Home to 12 million, Haiti has not held timely legislative elections since October 2019 and was plunged further into uncertainty when its president, Jovenel Moïse, was assassinated in July 2021."<sup>18</sup> At the time of this writing, Haiti still does not have a president, it does not have Senators or House representatives, and it does not have any elected mayors.<sup>19</sup> Imagine a country with not one elected official; that is the Haiti we live in now. While there are no elected officials, gangs are ruling, and the Haitian population is suffering the consequences. This summary report from World Vision, capturing up to March 2023, is clear:

Over 160,000 people are displaced due to the recent turmoil, with a quarter of them living in makeshift settlements. As many as 300 criminal gangs, with up to 150 in Port-au-Prince, are infiltrating Haiti's breadbasket as hunger spreads, according to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Violence spiked in the first quarter of 2023, with 807 fatalities (a 107% increase from the last quarter of 2022) and 746 injuries (up by 114%). There were also 627 reported kidnappings, representing a 125% increase from the previous quarter, according to U.N. reports.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Luke Taylor, "Haiti left with no elected government officials as it spirals towards anarchy." *The Guardian*, published online on January 10, 2023. (Accessed on January 1, 2024).

<sup>19</sup> A snapshot of Haiti in the weeks prior to Moïse's assassination reveals a country in deep distress. As of June 2021, more than 90 armed gangs operated throughout the country and controlled over half the capital Port-au-Prince, according to the United Nations. The entire Southern half of Haiti was cut off from the rest due to gang roadblocks. Fuel could not be unloaded from tankers because of security concerns; shortages were increasing; and more than half the nation's population subsisted on less than \$2 per day. At least 15,000 people had been internally displaced, and many found themselves in overcrowded community centers that humanitarian agencies found hard to reach because criminals controlled the vicinity ... Moïse had also hollowed out the country's political institutions, refusing to allow parliamentary elections and appointing surrogates to local posts. In an article titled "*Haiti: A Path to Stability for a Nation in Shock.*" <https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/haiti/b44-haiti-path-stability-nation-shock> (Accessed on December 23, 2021).

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.worldvision.org/disaster-relief-news-stories/haiti-crisis-faqs> (Accessed on November 16, 2023).

In a Zoom meeting with influential Evangelical Leaders in the United States, Haitian ambassador Emond Bocchit expressed his fear of what might happen in Haiti at any moment, given the current situation. He said, “Sometimes, I’m really scared that one day I will wake up in the morning to hear that the gangs have taken over all the public institutions—the president’s office, the prime minister’s office,” he said. “I’m really scared of that.”<sup>21</sup>

### **The Protestant Evangelical Church in Haiti**

In 1816,<sup>22</sup> 12 years after Haiti became independent, foreign Protestant missionaries started officially arriving in Haiti with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to evangelize and to plant churches in the newly independent country.<sup>23</sup> Different denominations began to arrive after that, and the Evangelical church (EC) spread across the nation, especially in the countryside.<sup>24</sup> Thus, an EC movement began taking root in Haiti. Protestantism spread in Haiti, despite

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<sup>21</sup> In an article titled “*What Evangelicals Owe Haiti.*” <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2023/april/haiti-untold-history-of-missions-what-evangelicals-owe.html> (Accessed on November 21, 2023).

<sup>22</sup> Charles-Poisset Romain, *Le Protestantisme dans la Société Haïtienne: Contribution à L'étude Sociologique d'une Religion.* (Port-au-Prince: Imprimerie Henri Deschamps, 1986), p. 22.

<sup>23</sup> Romain, *Le Protestantisme*, p. 22.

<sup>24</sup> (1) Methodism, established in Haiti in 1817, with its branches such as the Methodist Church of Haiti, the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Haiti, the Wesleyan Church of Haiti, formerly the American Wesleyan Church, the Salvation Army Church, Church of the Nazarene and Free Methodist Church inside Haiti, etc. (2) The Baptist, established in Haiti in 1823, with its branches such as the Union of Evangelical Baptist Churches of Haiti (UEBH), the Mission Baptist Conservatrice d'Haïti (MEBH), the Mission of the Evangelical Baptist Churches of the South of Haiti (MEBSH), the Baptist Convention of Haiti (CBH), the Baptist Missionary Confraternity of Haiti (CMBH), the Mission of the Associated Evangelical Baptist Churches (MEEBA), the United Brethren Church of God, the Conference of the Churches of God in Haiti, the Baptist Church Army of Christ, etc. (3) The North American Episcopal Church of reference, established in 1861 with two trends. Sometimes they claim to be on the side of the Catholics, sometimes on the side of the Protestants. (4) The Seventh-Day Adventist Church, established in 1905

opposition,<sup>25</sup> as it worked hand in hand with the state, especially the Methodist mission, and was even flourishing during what Christianity Today calls the “First era,” the period between independence and the time of World War II.<sup>26</sup> Christianity Today reports, “According to Bird [...], Haitian officials gave grants for the construction and repair of Methodist churches and school buildings. They funded evangelism efforts. In 1881, mission records show that the government contributed 42 percent of the Methodist church’s budget.”<sup>27</sup>

A second period of intense development of the Protestant movement in Haiti was during the reign of Francois Duvalier and his son Jean Claude Duvalier, from 1957 to 1986. The following report from Christianity Today is a good illustration,

They [the Protestant missions] ran at least 35 percent of schools in Haiti. In 1983, the Haitian Council of Evangelical Churches listed 1,097 Protestant organizations—almost certainly only a partial accounting. Twenty percent of them reported being involved in evangelism or church planting; the rest were dedicated to aid projects.”<sup>28</sup>

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with no other branches. (5) Pentecostalism, established in 1928, having the following branches: the Church of God in Christ, the Planted Church of God, the Pentecostal Church of God, the Assembly of God, the Church of God of Prophecy, etc. Article titled *“Enquête sur les représentations des leaders protestants haïtiens à propos de questions d’ordre théologique”* by Vijnonet Demero. <https://scienceetbiencommun.pressbooks.pub/protestantismehaiti/chapter/comment-des-leaders-protestants-haitiens-se-representent-des-questions-dordre-theologique/> (Accessed on November 21, 2023).

<sup>25</sup> “22 months after their arrival, Brown and Catts had to leave the country, and the Methodist gatherings for worship were prohibited.” Rosny Desroches, “*Survol des Deux Cents Ans du Methodisme en Haïti*,” *Deux Siècles de Protestantisme en Haïti (1816-2016): Implantation, Conversion et Sécularisation*. Vijnonet Demero et Samuel Regulus (Quebec: Editions Science et Bien Commun, 2017), p. 24.

<sup>26</sup> Griffiths, the Methodist historian, is shamelessly proud of what his church has done in Haiti. In his research, he boils down what we might even call the spirit of the first era, quoting the closing line from a posthumous book of Bird’s titled *Un Paradis Terrestre*: “We leave to each Haitian, to each man, to each woman in this beautiful country, the country of our adoption, to wonder, in front of their incomparable resources, if Haiti could not be an earthly paradise.” In an article titled *“What Evangelicals Owe Haiti.”* <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2023/april/haiti-untold-history-of-missions-what-evangelicals-owe.html> (Accessed on November 21, 2023).

<sup>27</sup> *“What Evangelicals Owe”*

<sup>28</sup> *“What Evangelicals Owe”*

During the time of the Duvalier, though the EC could further its development in the country to evangelize and continue to spread with the contributions of missionaries, the regime did not want any missionary interference in the political matters of the country, and they made it clear. The following report summarizes it well,

The regime's terms for missionaries were unambiguous. After ejecting more than 18 Jesuits from the country in 1964 for complaining about the government's interference at a seminary, the foreign ministry said in a statement that it welcomed clergy "so long as they do not interfere in the internal politics of Haiti."<sup>29</sup>

Since missionaries were prohibited from interfering with political matters in the country, they knowingly or unknowingly influenced the Haitians. They were evangelizing and developing to adopt the same posture. Reports show that many Protestant denominations in Haiti discourage political implications of believers,<sup>30</sup> although others recommend political implications.<sup>31</sup> In 1986, Claude Noel, the head of the Council of Evangelical Churches in Haiti at the time, affirmed that "Haitian evangelicals were 'very timid' about politics. Pastors would say that their job is to preach the Gospel, not to be political leaders."<sup>32</sup>

The EC was indeed developing. Christian missions were growing, and parachurch organizations like schools, hospitals, and clinics were being established. Notwithstanding, the society itself under the regime needed to improve. Haiti as a nation was separate from the equation. This is how Christianity Today explains it:

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<sup>29</sup> "What Evangelicals Owe"

<sup>30</sup> Romain, *Le Protestantisme*, pp. 85, 122, 131, 140, 152.

<sup>31</sup> Romain, *Le Protestantisme*, pp. 96, 112.

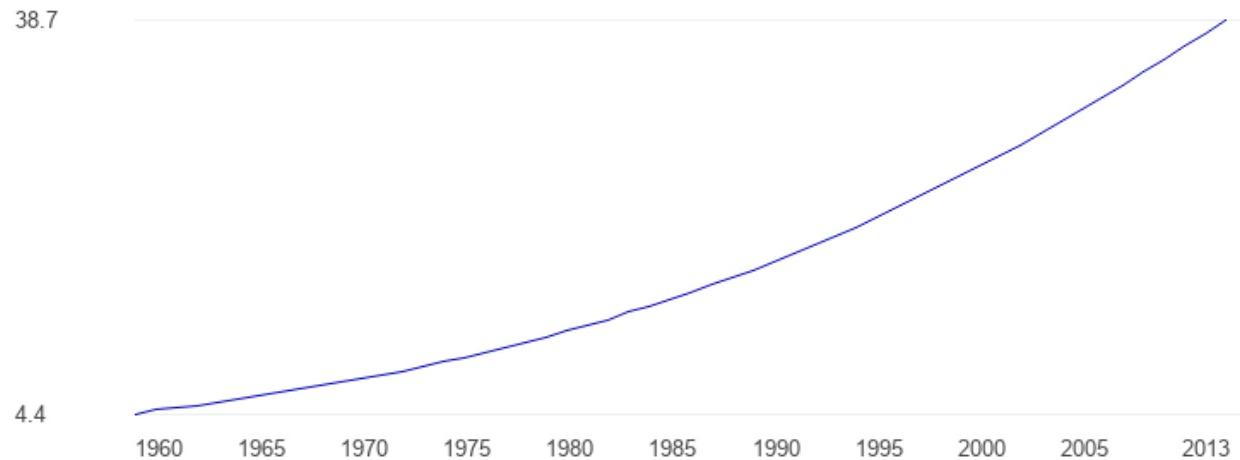
<sup>32</sup> "What Evangelicals Owe."

If the missionary enterprise flourished under the Duvalier family's reign, Haiti was left behind. Its economy stalled for 28 years. Preoccupied with eliminating threats to power, the Duvalier government made little investment in services like education, infrastructure, or health care. Haiti's police and justice system, having been hijacked for the regime's ends, offered no real protection to the most vulnerable. Educated professionals—the managerial and the creative classes that Haiti desperately needed to right itself—fled by the thousands. The regime cemented an oligarchy that, Haiti observers say, is roughly the same one that funded the gangs warring for control of Haiti today.<sup>33</sup>

### Impact of Protestantism on Society

In 2016, the Protestant church, established in Haiti in 1816, celebrated its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The following "Historical Chart"<sup>34</sup> illustrates the growth tendency of the Protestant population in Haiti from 1960 to 2013.

**Figure #1: Historical Chart**



Definition: Protestant Christians as percent of the total population

<sup>33</sup> "What Evangelicals Owe."

<sup>34</sup> "Haiti: Percent Protestant," *The Global Economy.com: Business and Economic Data for 200 Countries*. <https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Haiti/protestant/> (Accessed on January 2, 2024).

The EMMUS VI<sup>35</sup> reports that Protestants are the majority in Haiti,<sup>36</sup> with 56% women and 45% men. Another research that was published by the Institut d'Etudes Internationales de Montreal in November 2023 reported that Protestants in Haiti account for 23% of the population.<sup>37</sup> The Joshua Project acknowledges that there are 17.53% of evangelicals in Haiti.<sup>38</sup> Out of a population of about 11,905,897,<sup>39</sup> these reports indicate a significant number of evangelical Christians in Haiti, which did not start yesterday. As a result, it became an opportune time to ask a couple of questions. What is the nature of the spiritual success of the HEC in the lives of Haitian believers in Christ? Why has the EC not influenced Haitian society more positively despite its presence for 200 years? Pertinent questions like these beg long-term responses.

At the time of the earthquake in Haiti, in January 2010, similar questions were triggered by the catastrophe and its aftermath. A small group of professors at Séminaire de Théologie

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<sup>35</sup> *La sixième Enquête Mortalité, Morbidité et Utilisation des Services en Haïti 2016-2017 (EMMUS-VI)*, The sixth Mortality, Morbidity and Service Utilization Survey in Haiti 2016-2017 (EMMUS-VI).  
<https://www.unicef.org/haiti/rapports/emmus-vi-rapport-de-synth%C3%A8se-2018>

<sup>36</sup> “According to the government’s 2017 Survey on Mortality, Morbidity, and Use of Services, the most recent study available, Christians who self-identified as either Protestant, Episcopalian, Methodist, Seventh-Day Adventist, or Jehovah’s Witness together comprise 52 percent of the population, Catholics 35 percent, and Voodooists 2 percent.” *“2022 Report on International Religious Freedom: Haiti.”*  
<https://www.state.gov/reports/2022-report-on-international-religious-freedom/haiti/> (Accessed on January 2, 2024).

<sup>37</sup> Mobilisation des acteurs non étatiques pour faire face à la crise de gouvernance en Haïti: Rapport de recherche, Préparé par l’Institut d’études internationales de Montréal (IEIM), Novembre 2023.

<sup>38</sup> The Joshua Project, <https://joshuaproject.net/countries/HA> (Accessed on January 11, 2024).

<sup>39</sup> IHSI 2021.

Evangélique de Port-au-Prince (STEP),<sup>40</sup> a small group of short-term American missionaries from the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA), and two American missionaries who had been on the STEP faculty for decades, began to have a conversation. The main questions were: Why is Haiti in such a dire situation while the EC has been established here for almost 200 years? Why is the positive impact of the church on Haitian society not more evident? While Protestantism contributes significantly to the area of education,<sup>41</sup> the culture is still dominated by a search for pleasure and laziness.<sup>42</sup> In the conclusion of his “*Study on the Representations of Haitian Protestant Leaders about Theological Questions*,” Vijonet Demero suggests that some thought be given to the true impact of Protestantism on Haitian society.<sup>43</sup>

The conversation made us consider where the HEC might have failed. If the HEC was spiritually more robust and more mature, as a result of effective disciple-making, it would be able to have a more positive impact on Haitian society, as salt and light.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> STEP is located in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. This seminary has been training pastors for the HEC since 1942.

<sup>41</sup> Rosny Desroches, “*Le Protestantisme, une Force de Transformation pour la Communauté Haïtienne*” *Deux Siècles de Protestantisme en Haïti (1816-2016): Implantation, Conversion et Sécularisation*. Vijonet Demero et Samuel Regulus (Québec: Éditions Science et Bien Commun), p. 149.

<sup>42</sup> Desroches, *Le Protestantisme*, p. 153.

<sup>43</sup> Vijonet Demero, “*Enquête sur les Représentations des Leaders Protestants Haïtiens à propos de Questions d’ordre Théologique*,” *Deux Siècles de Protestantisme en Haïti (1816-2016): Implantation, Conversion et Sécularisation*. Vijonet Demero et Samuel Regulus (Québec: Éditions Science et Bien Commun), p. 137.

<sup>44</sup> Matt. 5:13-14. All Scripture citations are taken from the New International Version (NIV)s, The Ryrie Study Bible (Chicago: The Moody Bible Institute) 1986, unless otherwise noted.

## Definition of Disciple-Making

According to Aubrey Malphurs, disciple-making is “a process that includes leading unbelievers to faith in Christ so that they become disciples. It is an ongoing process that encourages the believer to follow Christ and become more like Him.”<sup>45</sup> According to Greg Ogden, disciple-making is not a program, but a transformative process by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is walking alongside a few invited fellow travelers in an intentional relationship over time.<sup>46</sup> It is teaching disciples how to follow Jesus, teaching them the words and way of ministry of Jesus, how to imitate His life and character, and how to find and teach others.<sup>47</sup> Hence, effective disciple-making is a Gospel-centered process to develop mature disciples of Jesus Christ intentionally. It begins with evangelism and baptism<sup>48</sup> to continue with life-on-life influence in a friendship relationship between disciple-makers and their disciples to study the Word of God, to encourage obedient application, to worship, to build accountability, to grow to spiritual maturity, and intentionally disciple others in a similar process with the same goal. It is to engage someone in a transformational process, an intentional journey toward maturity in Christ,<sup>49</sup> in light of what Christ did with His disciples and what Paul did to bring people to a

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<sup>45</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Strategic Disciple Making: A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), p. 34.

<sup>46</sup> Greg Ogden. *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), p. 17.

<sup>47</sup> Bill Hull, *The Complete Book of Discipleship: On Being and Making Followers of Christ*. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2006), p. 68.

<sup>48</sup> Bill Hull, *The Complete*, p. 34.

<sup>49</sup> Ogden, *Transforming*, p. 15.

place where they can be fully mature in Christ.<sup>50</sup> For the HEC to be effectively discipled according to the Great Commission to produce this kind of disciples, there has to be an army of disciples makers, worthy of their names, prioritizing disciple-making and embracing it aggressively with no delay.

### **Disciple-Makers Make Disciples**

The dynamic of disciple-making requires that the teacher becomes skilled at the process to make disciples. Consequently, disciple-makers must be people who have been discipled so they can guide their disciples through the same process. Before sending His disciples out to make disciples, Jesus took time to disciple them. When He finally sent them to make disciples in Matthew 28:19-20, they did not ask Him any questions to clarify anything. They knew exactly what He asked them to do. There is a seminary in almost every major Christian denomination in Haiti and an increasing number of Bible schools.<sup>51</sup> Why is it that disciple-making, according to the Great Commission, is not happening correctly in the churches where the graduates of those seminaries serve as pastors? Those discussions at the time and the fact that things continue to deteriorate in Haiti have given us a strong desire to address at least one facet of the problem to provide comprehensive answers to help the HEC improve.

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<sup>50</sup> Eph 4:11-13; Col 1:28.

<sup>51</sup> The Church of God, The Church of the Nazarene, The Methodist Church, for example.

## **Justification of the Thesis-Project**

In his epistle to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul wrote that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the “power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes.”<sup>52</sup> The idea of this verse has to do, not only with the status of the believer who is declared righteous regardless of who he is or what she has done but, also, has to do with the transformation of the condition of the person. God is in the business of restoration. Paul talks about the renewing of the mind in Romans 12:2. This renewing of the mind relates to a change of worldview that will lead to a shift in attitude and behavior of the believer toward God, toward self, toward coworkers, toward the church, and the whole society. One following Christ, living in obedience to Him, loving Him, imitating Him, and trying to be like Him, will see positive changes in all areas of his or her life. This refers to something radical and efficient for the believers as they begin living according to the will of God. In their reflection about this worldview, Charles Colson and Nancy Pearcey put it this way,

When we truly grasp this, we are compelled to see that the Christian faith cannot be reduced to John 3:16 or simple formulas. Christianity cannot be limited to only one component of our lives, a mere religious practice of observance or even a salvation experience. We are compelled to see Christianity as the all-encompassing truth, the root of everything else. It is the ultimate reality.<sup>53</sup>

In other words, true conversion and discipleship usually produce mature Christians who are characterized by love and respect for God and His word, willful obedience to God, submission to the will of the Holy Spirit, integrity and honesty, love of neighbors, diligence,

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<sup>52</sup> Rom 1:16.

<sup>53</sup> Charles Colson & Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall We Live?* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1999), p. 15.

fairness, a spirit of sacrifice, and reproduction. In such conditions, the life of the disciple is characterized by the fruit of the Spirit.<sup>54</sup> For instance, the apostle Paul, who served the Lord as an apostle to the Gentiles, who discipled many believers, planted churches, and produced, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the epistles we call the Pauline epistles in the New Testament was not always this kind of person he became. In Galatians 2:20, he declares, “I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved and gave himself for me.”

Effective disciple-making produces “impact result.”<sup>55</sup> Effective disciple-making in the HEC would cause believers, having been discipled and grown to spiritual maturity in Christ, to turn around and start discipling others. Thenceforward, there would be no one without a disciple-maker discipling them, and no one without disciples in their lives whom they are developing. Marriages would be stronger as the young people learn to make better choices to marry, as husbands and wives learn about their biblical roles and how to play them with the power of the Holy Spirit. Children would benefit from the spiritual growth of their parents, who learn biblical principles to apply as they raise them Christianly. Parents who are so discipled would become people of integrity who would positively influence Haitian society.

Unfortunately, the impact has not been so positive.<sup>56</sup>

One aspect of the problem of the HEC is where people learn about Christian living. This

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<sup>54</sup> Will Mancini, *Innovating Discipleship: Four Paths to Real Discipleship Results*. (City unlisted, SC: Church Unique Intentional Leader Series, 2013), p. 15.

<sup>55</sup> Mancini, *Innovating*, p. 15.

<sup>56</sup> Demero, *Enquête*, p. 137; Desroches, *Le Protestantisme*, p. 153.

learning happens in Sunday school. The other aspect is the need for more effective disciplemakers.

### Sunday School

In the HEC, Sunday school is the main program where people learn about Christian living. It is the most valued both by the leaders and the congregants. It is usually more structured than other programs in the local churches. However, how Sunday school is managed, its schedule and its practical approach hinder disciple-making. The management of Sunday school could be better to favor interactions and spiritual growth among the believers. Among the 52 Sundays in a year, about 40 are open for Sunday school to happen.<sup>57</sup> One hour per Sunday, Sunday school would average 40 hours a year. Half the hour of Sunday school is usually used to check presence on the roster, count the Bibles and songbooks, collect the offerings, share some prayer requests, and have prayer time. That way, what is left is a half-hour for the lesson. With that particular model, it would be an average of 20 hours of Sunday school lessons in one year. Someone who has attended Sunday school regularly for 20 years would receive about 20 days of Bible lessons. Believers cannot grow spiritually in such a reality. For believers to develop and become spiritually mature, they must be intentionally disciplined with an appropriate model that can produce the expected results.

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<sup>57</sup> When a church puts aside the one-month break, the Sundays around Christmas, Easter, and other special Sundays when Sunday school would be canceled, Sunday school can easily end up with an average of 40 Sundays to meet during the year.

## A Shortage of Disciple-Makers

The other aspect of the problem is the shortage of effective disciple-makers to implement disciple-making in the HEC. Before sending His disciples out to make disciples, Jesus took time to disciple them, knowing that disciple-makers must be discipled. When He finally sent them to make disciples in Matthew 28:19-20, they did not ask for any clarification questions. They knew what He asked them to do. There is a need for genuine disciples of Jesus Christ who understand disciple-making and are willing to embark on the journey with people who need it. Heather Zempel talks about five models of discipleship: relational, experiential, academic, personal, and incarnational.<sup>58</sup> Each of them has characteristics that require knowledge and sacrifices from the disciple-maker. Zempel encourages a combination of those models because everyone has strengths and weaknesses. Combining these provides a better chance to develop more complete disciples.

## Importance of the Thesis-Project

If Haiti needs to escape its current condition, its children must get up and address it. The spiritual quality of the children in Haiti, as of now, would have to be addressed first. Only people of integrity and solid Christian conviction can live up to the challenge. If the ministry continues to be approached the same way it used to for 200 years, the same unsatisfying result will be produced. Therefore, the researcher volunteered to research the subject and try to find principles that might help the HEC address the problem.

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<sup>58</sup> Heather Zempel, “*Models of Discipleship Throughout Church History*,” an article published on February 1, 2006. <https://discipleshipgroups.blogspot.com/2006/02/models-of-discipleship-throughout.html> (Accessed on January 1, 2024).

## The Research Question

Even after 200 years of preaching and teaching the Gospel in Haiti, EC have been established across denominations and parachurch organizations have been ministering, the picture remains grim. Such a reality calls for the approach to the ministry of HEC to be reevaluated and modified. This thesis-project addresses the problem of a shortage of intentional and effective discipleship-making in the HEC, resulting in a church with large numbers of people but minimal impact on Haitian society. Sermons are preached every Sunday, Sunday school classes are taught every Sunday, and Bible studies and prayer meetings happen weekly. Christians are expected to grow to maturity and to impact Haitian society positively. However, the positive impact of the HEC in Haiti is meager. According to the Great Commission, we believe that the answer is in disciple-making. Disciple-making is the primary mission of the church, according to the Great Commission,<sup>59</sup> and the term Great Commission is so prevalent in the jargon of the HEC. Nevertheless, intentional and effective disciple-making to produce the impact that positive impact and genuine disciple-making normally produce is not a reality in the HEC. The HEC has been developing countless programs that evidently do not result in a church that is fully discipled and positively impacting Haitian society. There must be something that is preventing it. Whatever that is, the author of this thesis-project has chosen to call those obstacles<sup>60</sup> to intentional and effective disciple-making that the researcher sets out to identify in this study. Therefore, the research question of this thesis-project is: What are the obstacles

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<sup>59</sup> Malphurs, *Strategic*, pp. 13-14.

<sup>60</sup> Defined in the section titled “Definition of Keywords” below.

to intentional and effective disciple-making in the HEC?

### **Assumptions**

The first assumption is that disciple-making based on the Great Commission and in line with Christ's approach has the potential to produce spiritually mature Christians who can influence their families, their churches, and their communities. The gospels prove that Jesus selected men who were already adults and discipled them. Follow me, Jesus said, and I will make you fishers of men.<sup>61</sup> He influenced their lives to the point where they developed strong convictions about their relationships with Christ and their calling to minister for Him even in the face of great adversity.<sup>62</sup> When the truth of the Gospel reaches the depth of the heart of someone, it produces radical changes in the life of that person. The apostle Paul is an example of that truth. In Acts 9 and Philippians 3, the Bible tells us about how Paul radically changed, embraced Christ radically, and even counted the things that used to be of great value to him as mud. It was a change of mindset, a change of the whole person. Something is preventing the Haitian believer from receiving the Gospel as Paul did. We believe that intentional discipleship is the solution to that. It can put the individual into a process that can result in radical change. We talk about change in Christian circles, but it has not happened efficiently and influenced Haitian society.

The second assumption is that churches, populated by Christians who are appropriately discipled and rising to disciple others, will impact society and transform it. Haiti can become a

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<sup>61</sup> Matt 4:19.

<sup>62</sup> Acts 5:28-30.

country characterized by Christian spirituality, stable governments, justice, integrity, love, a growing economy, a balanced environment, a quality educational system, and a healthy place to live and retire, with an EC characterized by effective disciple-making. Rosny Desroches reports that Protestants used to make a significant impact on Haitian society in the past.<sup>63</sup>

The church cannot replace the state! Although it can positively influence corruption in the government, problems of social justice, juvenile delinquency, insecurity, wealth distribution, unemployment issues, education, and health administration, to name a few, as by-products of disciple-making.<sup>64</sup>

### **Limitations of the Thesis-Project**

This thesis-project will limit itself to considering the Protestant EC in Haiti. This means that it will not analyze issues in churches beyond the border of Haiti. Even in Haiti, this thesis-project will not consider churches not self-identified as Evangelical. Besides the geographical and the Evangelical vs. non-Evangelical limitations, this thesis-project will limit itself to effective disciple-making, trying to see the obstacles to effective disciple-making in the HEC, keeping it from making a greater and positive impact on Haitian society.

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<sup>63</sup> "Catts Pressoir made in Haiti the same observation as the great German sociologist Max Weber for the Protestant nations in Europe: The Protestant ethic had helped them to prosper economically. Haitian Protestantism helped the convert to get rid of fear and hatred of others, to grow morally and even to achieve a certain material well-being. It will also help Haitian society to evolve... in three areas, human rights, education, and development." Desroches, *Le Protestantisme*, p. 147.

<sup>64</sup> Mancini, *Innovating*, p. 15.

## **Definitions of Keywords**

The following are some keywords that ought to be presented and explained before we go deeper into the research and fundamentals for this thesis-project.

### **Obstacles**

An obstacle is defined as something that hinders, slows down, or blocks the advancement of an idea, a process, a person, or a thing. For example, someone could have an idea without permission to implement it in a given system. In the context of this thesis-project, an obstacle is an idea, value, or mentality that impedes the advancement of effective disciple-making in the HEC. Obstacles in this context relate to the things that hinder understanding discipleship in general as a movement based on the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. Obstacles here also relate to the things that deter individual churches at the local level from embracing a discipleship agenda in their congregations. Obstacles are also associated with the things that prevent Evangelical leaders from personally embracing discipleship as a philosophy of ministry in their sphere of influence, such as misinterpretation, disobedience, and non-biblical practices.

### **Disciple, Disciples**

The word “disciple” comes from a Greek word usually translated as a student, a learner, a follower, or an apprentice. In the Bible, the word “disciple” is used for different categories of people, but generally, people who have a relationship with Christ are becoming more like Christ. The word is used, at times, for the followers of Jesus who became the apostles, for new

converts, or for committed Christians who are intentionally growing in their relationship with Christ. Along that line, Aubrey Malphurs writes:

A common view is that a disciple is a committed believer. Thus, a disciple is a believer, but a believer is not necessarily a disciple. But that's not how the New Testament uses this term. I contend that the normative use of the term *disciple* is for one who is a convert to or a believer in Jesus Christ (there are a few exceptions to this— “the disciples of Moses” in John 9:28 and the “disciples” of the Pharisees in Matthew 22:16 for example). Thus, the Bible teaches that a disciple is not necessarily a Christian who has made a deeper commitment to the Savior but simply a Christian. Committed Christians are committed disciples. Uncommitted Christians are uncommitted disciples. This is clearly how Luke uses the term *disciple* in the book of Acts and his gospel. A great example is Acts 14:21, where Luke says they made “disciples” in connection with evangelism. Here, they preached the Gospel and won a large number of disciples or converts, not mature or even growing Christians. Disciples, then, were synonymous with believers.<sup>65</sup>

Warren Wiersbe, in the *Wiersbe Bible Commentary*, comments also on the term “disciples” in Matthew 28 in these words:

The term “disciples” was the most popular name for the early believers. Being a disciple meant more than being a convert or a church member. Apprentice might be an equivalent term. A disciple attached himself to a teacher, identified with him, learned from him, and lived with him. He learned not simply by listening but also by doing. Our Lord called twelve disciples and taught them so that they might be able to teach others (Mark 3:13ff).<sup>66</sup>

The Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 made great sense for the disciples of Jesus because, at the time when Jesus was speaking to them, He had already discipled them for about three and a half years. They did experience first-hand what Jesus was talking about during the three-plus years. They did not need clarifications! Jesus says that someone incapable

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<sup>65</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Disciple Making: A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), p. 18.

<sup>66</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary*. (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2007), p.87.

of committing to follow Him wholeheartedly in complete obedience cannot be His disciple.<sup>67</sup>

This means that even though Jesus calls “disciples” those following Him before making any significant commitments, He intended for them to mature.

In this thesis-project, the words “disciple” and “disciples” are used concerning individuals who are in a process in which the Jesus of the Bible is introduced to them, they receive Him in their lives, and they commit to developing a learning relationship with a mentor who is intentionally teaching them in a small group dynamic, modeling for them, guiding them through applications so that they can become spiritually mature and also mentor others in that same way.

### Disciple-Making

Disciple-making is understood in this thesis-project as a two-fold endeavor. It is a process that includes evangelism-proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to bring unbelievers to salvation in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and discipleship which is the relationship process of a discipler with the believer to bring that person to spiritual maturity in Christ.<sup>68</sup> In other words, it is a journey that begins before salvation and continues after salvation in Christ to intentionally develop the new believer spiritually to the degree where he or she can repeat the process with others to bring them to maturity in Christ.

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<sup>67</sup> See Luke 14:26-27, 33.

<sup>68</sup> Bill Hull, *The Disciple-Making Church: Leading a Body of Believers on the Journey of Faith*. (Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks, 2010), pp. 11-12.

## Discipleship

Malphurs states that, "To talk about Christian discipleship properly, we must use the term to refer to the growth of a disciple (Christian) in every area of his or her life."<sup>69</sup> Discipleship is viewed as a process with a starting point and a goal. Considering that, Michael Wilkins writes:

Conversion marks the beginning of discipleship, not a later point of commitment or a process of spiritual growth. Degrees of maturity will be realized as one traverses the discipleship path, but all true believers are disciples on that path. Therefore, evangelism is the starting point for making disciples. Jesus said that we are to make disciples of all "nations," not of all those who are already believers. With Luke's additional insights, we can see that prospective converts must somehow be challenged to count the cost of the life of discipleship.<sup>70</sup>

Disciple-making involves intentional relationships between disciple-makers and disciples so that the process can begin and develop toward the goal of spiritual maturity in Christ can be reached. There is also the expectation of multiplication. When disciple-makers start developing relationships with disciples to teach them, guide them, model for them, and influence them, it is expected that the disciples, as they mature, will also become disciple-makers to influence others in that same way.

## Church

In Romans 16, after he had sent greetings to Priscilla and Aquila in verse 4, Paul says in verse 5, "Greet also the church that meets at their house." The word "church" comes from the

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<sup>69</sup> Malphurs, *Disciple*, p. 34.

<sup>70</sup> Michael J. Wilkins, *Following the Master: A Biblical Theology of Discipleship*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), p. 26; Cited by Malphurs, *Disciple*, p. 34.

Greek word “*ekklesia*” which means “assembly” or “called out ones.” This word was used in the Greek Old Testament—the Septuagint—“to describe the congregation of Israel when it was gathered for religious activity.”<sup>71</sup> In this sense, the word refers to people, not a building. It is worth noting that Christ was not referring to the same kind of assembly when He used the word “*ekklesia*” in Matthew 16. He said: “I will build my ‘*ekklesia*.’”<sup>72</sup> In this passage, Jesus used the word “*ekklesia*” to refer to the universal church, which is the body of Christ and Christ is the head. Regarding this idea, here is what Paul wrote in his letter to the Ephesians, “And God placed all things under His feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”<sup>73</sup> That would be manifested at many different levels. The word “church” may refer to different levels of its existence. It can refer to,

1. The universal church, which is the crowd of all believers in Christ that has ever existed anywhere in the world, since the beginning of the church in Acts 2 to the present. Whether the believer in Christ is already dead physically or still living, she or he is a member of the universal church.
2. The church in a whole country or several countries in a whole region that is constituted of all the believers in Christ in the country or region without taking into account which denomination they are a part of.

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<sup>71</sup> Deut 31:30; Judg 20:2; Wiersbe, *The Wiersbe*, p. 48.

<sup>72</sup> Matt 16:18.

<sup>73</sup> Eph 1:22-23.

3. The church in a city that includes all the true believers in Christ in that city of all the denominations.
4. The true believers in Christ in all the local churches in a given denomination. For instance, one may say the “Baptist church in Haiti,” the “Pentecostal church in Haiti,” or the “Wesleyan church in Haiti”.
5. A local church is a group of believers in Christ meeting at a given address somewhere. It is a place where a group of members of the universal church meets to encourage, teach, and build each other up in the body according to the principles of Acts 2:42-47 and 1 Corinthians 12.

In this thesis-project, the church is understood to be all the true believers in Jesus Christ across the denominations in Haiti.

### Evangelical

The definition of Evangelical has shifted many times through the years. In an article published on December 7, 2015, Jonathan Merritt mentions that “George Marsden once said that in the 1950s and 1960s, an Evangelical Christian was anyone who likes Billy Graham. Later, in the late 1980’s, Billy Graham himself could not describe what the term meant when he was asked.”<sup>74</sup> Because of the nature of the Protestant church and the emphasis on the priesthood of all believers, many different individuals and groups can develop their definitions and views of the term “Evangelical.” Along that line, Jonathan Merrit says,

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<sup>74</sup> “Defining evangelical” <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/12/evangelical-christian/418236/> (Consulted on April 16, 2018).

The disparate nature of evangelicalism makes its members difficult to define. They don't have a single authority like the Roman Catholic pope or the Mormon First Presidency, so you can't just phone a central office and ask for the official definition. Since they span a range of denominations, churches, and organizations, there is no single membership statement to delineate identity. As a result, individual observers are left to decide how to define what makes someone or something *evangelical*. To the pollster, it is a sociological term. To the pastor, it is a denominational or doctrinal term. And to the politician, it is a synonym for a white Christian Republican.<sup>75</sup>

The above considerations make it difficult for different individuals or groups to agree on what Evangelical is. However, for the sake of this thesis-project, we have to agree on a few pillars. First, the word "Evangelical" refers to "belonging to or designating the Christian churches that emphasize the teachings and authority of the Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, in opposition to the institutional authority of the Church itself."<sup>76</sup>

The word "Evangelical" comes from the Greek "*ueangelikos*," "*euangelos*."<sup>77</sup> It comes from the Greek word "*euangelion*," meaning Gospel or Good News. In this sense, Evangelical refers to anyone or anything attached to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Anyone who believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, that Christ is the Son of God who gave His life for the sins of the world, that salvation is by grace, through faith, that God cares about how Christians live their lives in the world so they can influence the world for His glory, that Christ will come back to take His church and to judge the world for its sins is evangelical.

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<sup>75</sup> "Defining Evangelical" <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/12/evangelical-christian/418236/> (Consulted on April 16, 2018).

<sup>76</sup> Dictionary.com, Evangelical.

<sup>77</sup> <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com> (Accessed on April 16, 2018).

### **Evangelical Church**

In this thesis-project, EC will always refer to a Protestant church characterized by the essential elements of Evangelicalism mentioned above in the definition of Evangelical.

### **Disciple-Making Church**

A disciple-making church (DMC) is a church that focuses its philosophy of ministry on disciple-making based on Jesus' command in the Great Commission. It is a church that intentionally creates an atmosphere for the body to be organized in small groups that will make sure that friendship relationships are developed in them to encourage spiritual growth and development of each member through life-on-life influence, learning the Word of God, learning about God, about Christian living, so that everyone will become fully mature in Christ.<sup>78</sup> A DMC is a church that creates conditions for all its members to be intentionally discipled and for those who are discipled to turn around and disciple others, according to the teachings of Matthew 28:18-20 and 2 Timothy 2:2.

### **Methodology**

This study used qualitative and quantitative methods through interviews of individuals around observations and opinions. The interview questionnaire prepared by the researcher allowed each participant to freely express their thoughts, understandings, beliefs, and observations on the subject.

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<sup>78</sup> Col 1:28; Eph 4:13.

### Participants

Ten participants were selected to be interviewed based on a list of characteristics so that the sample could be a valuable representative of the HEC. Haitian Evangelical leaders in critical positions in the life of the HEC were selected with the authority and ability to provide answers helpful to the study.

### Instrumentation

The instrumentation used for this study is an interview questionnaire of ten questions fleshed out from the research question.

### Variables

There were a certain number of variables in this study. A dependent variable is the effect the pre-interview conversations and the letter from the researcher had on the participants. The intervening variables are,

1. Differences in denominations of participants.
2. Differences in positions of participants in the life of the church.
3. The sincerity level of participants in answering the questions.
4. Differences in the dynamics between face-to-face interviews and interviews over the telephone.

### Data Collection

The interviews were conducted face to face for some and others over the telephone because of distance and political unrest that prevented traveling around the country. All the interviews, whether face to face or over the telephone, were recorded. They were between 25 to 40 minutes long. The answers were short or semi-elaborate, with some illustrations, at times, from the participants, especially to clarification questions.

### Data Analysis

The answers were studied to find common themes or observations that look the same or opposite.

### **Chapters on this Thesis-Project**

The next four chapters are organized as follows. The second chapter of this thesis-project reflects on disciple-making and looks at the Old and the New Testament to provide a biblical foundation. It examines disciple-making in the Old Testament, the Great Commission in the New Testament, the discipleship model of Jesus, and the discipleship model of Paul. The third chapter reviews several principal writings on discipleship and disciple-making to learn more about what they have to say and reflect on their application to the Haitian context.

The fourth chapter presents the main outcomes of the extensive interview research conducted by the researcher in 2019 among pastors and key leaders in the HEC. The final chapter brings together the main discoveries and lessons learned into an action plan to address

the obstacles to effective disciple-making at the theological institution and church levels and implement a model that might produce the expected results.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has established that disciple-making has not been the trademark of the HEC, even though Christ had clearly expressed His desire in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20. The command in that passage is to make disciples, which is to go through a process of an intentional relationship with someone to teach that person to live according to the will of God through personal influence in reading the Bible, memorizing passages, meditating on the Word of God, living a life of obedience motivated by love for Jesus, and bearing fruit. All that, in small group dynamics for life-on-life influence. However, the HEC has adopted the habit of evangelizing and bringing people into the fold, expecting them to grow to maturity through a different process, mainly consisting of Sunday School and worship service, Bible study, and weekly prayer meetings. Attendance is expected but not mandatory.

Based on the command in the Great Commission, the EC was supposed to be nothing but a DMC. Since this is not the case, this chapter asks the following research question: What are the obstacles keeping the HEC from becoming a disciple-making church? It also justifies the question and its limits. The first chapter ends with defining critical concepts related to effective disciple-making and the methodology.

## CHAPTER 2

### BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

#### **Introduction**

Dietrich Bonhoeffer affirms that “Christianity without discipleship is always Christianity without Christ.”<sup>1</sup> In the introduction to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of his book *Jesus Christ, Disciple Maker*, Bill Hull expresses his concern based on observations he makes about disciple-making approaches that do not work or the lack of it in the EC, although disciple-making is supposed to be the primary work of the church. Hull writes the following,

Why is our discipleship only in-house and non-reproductive? This is the question that troubles me almost twenty years after the first publication of *Jesus Christ, Disciplemaker*. In 1984, the year that Orwell said Big Brother would take over our lives, my first offering on the primary work of the church was unleashed on the reading public... I say “primary work of the church” because I have not mellowed in my belief that making disciples is indeed the primary and exclusive work of the church. The fact that the church is weaker than ever and shrinking is the evidence that we still haven’t got it.<sup>2</sup>

This thesis-project attempts to help the HEC discover the obstacles keeping it from becoming a DMC. A DMC focuses on creating an atmosphere for the whole congregation to embark on discipleship as teachers for those spiritually mature or as disciples so that the church as a body can follow Christ in obedience according to His requirements in Matthew 28:18-20. The Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, being of such great importance for the church of Jesus Christ, must be clarified so that everyone responding to it can do it with strong

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<sup>1</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*. (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1995), p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> Bill Hull, *Jesus Christ, Disciple Maker*, 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004), p. 9.

confidence and a greater chance of success. This chapter is a theology of disciple-making as an attempt to provide the necessary clarification. The author of this thesis-project will consider discipleship in the Old Testament and discipleship in the New Testament, especially concerning Jesus and the apostle Paul.

### **Disciple-Making in the Old Testament**

According to Karl Rengstorf, there was no master-disciple relation in the Old Testament (OT).<sup>3</sup> This conclusion is drawn simply because the Hebrew words for “learner” and “taught one” are uncommon in the OT. Michael J. Wilkins indicates that the word “*talmîdh*,” which is the Hebrew equivalent of the common Greek word “*mathetes*,” is used only once in the OT to refer to a pupil in contrast to a teacher of a novice in comparison to a master.<sup>4</sup> However, the OT seems to indicate many cases of that kind of relationship among the people of the ancient world. Beginning with the Exodus account, some relationships can be qualified as master-disciple relationships.

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<sup>3</sup> “The word *talmidh*, ‘learner,’ occurs only once of musicians and their apprentices (1 Chron 25:8), and ‘*limadh*,’ ‘taught one,’ only once in connection with a prophet (Isa 8:16; possibly Isa 50:4). This led Karl Rengstorf to conclude that ‘Apart from the formal relation between teacher and pupil, the OT, unlike the classical Greek world and Hellenism, has no master-disciple relation. Whether among the prophets or the scribes we seek in vain for anything corresponding to it.’ Karl H. Rengstorf, ‘*mathetes*,’ in R. Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1967), p. 427. Cited by Robert J. Banks in *Reenvisioning Theological Education: Exploring a Missional Alternative to Current Models*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), p. 88.

<sup>4</sup> Michael J. Wilkins, *Following the Master: Discipleship in the Steps of Jesus*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992) pp. 54-55.

## Moses and Joshua

The Bible tells us nothing about Joshua before we see Moses selecting him to lead the Israelites in a battle against the Amalekites in Exodus 17. Moses told Joshua to do something in Exodus 17:9, and at the beginning of verse 10, we see that “Joshua did as Moses told him.” This signifies obedience to the master who chose to disciple him. He trusted Moses, who promised to be on the mountain with Aaron and Hur. We do not know whether Moses had already started to invest in the life of Joshua before Exodus 17. Nevertheless, beginning in Exodus 17, Moses intentionally and proactively poured into the life of Joshua until he commissioned him as his successor before his death. In other words, Moses discipled Joshua, whom he took under his wings. In this special mentor-apprentice relationship, Moses was able to guide Joshua in his learning, and he was able to watch Moses closely to witness how Moses usually related to God, how he lived by faith in that walk with God, and how he led. Joshua was with Moses even on the mountain when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments for the people. Even Aaron was asked to stay back, but Joshua, the disciple, had the privilege to go up with his mentor Moses.<sup>5</sup> That is how close the disciple was to the mentor to learn by experience. He was granted a lot of access so that he could learn by watching and witnessing the life and ministry of the mentor. Consequently, Joshua followed Moses almost everywhere, especially when he presented himself before God to hear from Him.<sup>6</sup> This is how involved Joshua was in the life and ministry of Moses and how involved Moses was in the life of Joshua in the process of his development.

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<sup>5</sup> Ex 24:12-14; 32:15-18.

<sup>6</sup> Ex 33:7-11.

When Eldad and Medad also prophesied in the camp,<sup>7</sup> as an aid who loved his master, Joshua felt that the position of Moses was threatened. And when Joshua reacted, saying, “Moses, my lord, stop them!”<sup>8</sup> Moses used that to teach his disciple leadership lessons by saying, “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish all the Lord’s people were prophets, and the Lord would put his Spirit on them!”<sup>9</sup> On that occasion, Joshua could watch Moses not feeling threatened because God gave gifts to other people. He was not someone who was jealous of his position and would use more of his energy to protect that position instead of taking care of the people. Moses was not angry because those two did not make it to the gathering prophesied anyway. Instead, he was ready for even more when he said he wished all the people of the Lord were prophets. Joshua might have learned from that declaration of Moses that a leader chosen by God should not be insecure. The leader should have confidence in the Lord and always be ready to step away whenever the Lord chooses to use someone else to allow that one to step in. Moses and Joshua spent about 40 years together in that teacher-disciple relationship. When the Lord told Moses Joshua was the one to replace him, Moses knew that Joshua already had excellent training for that ministry because he was taught and was influenced intentionally by his mentor during all those years. Moses gladly stepped away and allowed Joshua to step in, according to the will of God.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Num 11:26-27.

<sup>8</sup> Num 11:28.

<sup>9</sup> Num 11:29.

<sup>10</sup> Num 27:12-23; Deut 31.

## Elijah and Elisha

In 1 Kings 19, the prophet Elijah was experiencing significant discouragement and distress. He complained before God in verse 10, and the Lord told him to anoint Elisha to succeed him as prophet.<sup>11</sup> In 1 Kings 19:19- 21, Elijah threw his cloak on Elisha, who understood it as a call to follow the prophet, Elijah. Verse 21 shows that, not only did Elijah understand what Elijah wanted, but he also responded accordingly and in a very drastic manner. The passage says that Elisha—who was plowing when he was called—took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people to eat. Then, he set out to follow Elijah and became his servant. The word that is translated as “to follow” here is “*halak*” in the Hebrew language, which sometimes carries the idea of “make linear motion behind another.”<sup>12</sup> In the case where Jacob was going to meet his brother Esau, for example, he decided to send some of his people ahead of him, and he was following behind.<sup>13</sup> Other times, it means “to follow” in the sense of adhering to a person, a group, or a belief.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, for Elijah to follow Elisha means that Elisha agreed to walk around behind Elijah while adhering to him and his beliefs.

The Bible does not say how long Elisha would follow Elijah before they parted on the other side of the Jordan, but whatever long it was, they had enough time to develop a strong

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<sup>11</sup> 1 Kings 19:16.

<sup>12</sup> follow, i.e., make linear motion behind another. J. Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Hebrew, Old Testament*, electronic ed. (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997)

<sup>13</sup> Gen 32:20.

<sup>14</sup> follow, i.e., be an adherent of a person, group, or belief (Lev 26:3). Swanson, *Dictionary*, Logos.

bond between them. This is evidenced in 2 Kings 2. Three times in 2 King 2,<sup>15</sup> Elisha was asked to stay back, but he was determined to stick to his master to follow him wherever he went. Notice that Elijah was in Gilgal when he told Elisha that the Lord had sent him to Bethel. Then they went from Bethel to Jericho and from Jericho to the Jordan River. This means they walked a good number of miles on that day. Elisha was okay with the distances. He was determined to follow Elijah wherever he went. There were three significant observations in the passage when Elijah was taken up. One is that they were having a very open conversation about Elijah's departure and the final desired blessings on the part of Elisha.<sup>16</sup> This indicates that the disciple-maker and his disciple had great proximity in the relationship, to the point where Elisha said, "My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!"<sup>17</sup> Elisha saw a father in Elijah. He saw someone who was guiding him, helping him to grow in his relationship with the Lord, and training him for the ministry he was about to have by taking him along and modeling for him along the way.

The second observation is when Elisha took the cloak that had fallen from Elijah and struck the water with it. What Elisha said is significant. "Where is the Lord, the God of Elijah?"<sup>18</sup> This indicates that Elijah did not teach Elisha that he was the one who had the power in himself to do miraculous things, nor that it was the cloak that was so special. But Elisha knew that it was the power of God that was with Elijah. Even though Elijah was gone, Elisha knew that God

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<sup>15</sup> vv. 2, 4, 6.

<sup>16</sup> 2 Kings 2:9-11.

<sup>17</sup> 2 Kings 2:12.

<sup>18</sup> 2 Kings 2:14.

was still with him, and he could call upon Him. The third observation is that having been discipled for the ministry, Elisha was ready to take it over. His attitude and words show that seeing his mentor and friend go was painful, but he was ready and took the cloak and left. He began by parting the Jordan river again so he could cross, and when the company of the prophets of Jericho offered to send their 50 men to look for Elijah, Elisha said no.<sup>19</sup> He knew that Elijah was gone for good and that he was to embrace and continue the ministry. Elisha was not shying away because he was discipled and prepared.

A point to be made at this point is that the above disciple-makers trained their disciples in non-formal settings. They did not have a set of documents to cover like in a formal school with a previously decided curriculum. The approach and the purpose were intentional, but the content took its form as they went through life and did ministry together. Therefore, the content was not the same in every case. They all influenced those they were discipling as they lived everyday life, making different experiences in life in their settings. The disciples learned God's truth, how to trust God, how to live according to God's will, and even how to disciple others by watching their mentors through the relationships they developed together.

#### The Command in Deuteronomy 6:1-9

Moses was about to present some commands of the Lord to the new generation of Israelites who were with him in the plains of Moab, about to enter the Promised Land. Before he presents the commands per se, he sets the table with God's expectations of the people in verses 1-3.

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<sup>19</sup> 2 Kings 2:16.

- 1) God's expectation is clear: He wanted the Israelites to observe,<sup>20</sup> to keep<sup>21</sup>, and to obey<sup>22</sup> His Words. Moses uses three words that are translated as commands, decrees, and laws in the NIV to refer to the Word of God being delivered to the people to emphasize that the Word of God comes with His authority and expectation of positive response, of obedience from them.
- 2) God was expecting the Israelites to express their deep reverence toward Him.<sup>23</sup> That was to be demonstrated by their obedience to God.
- 3) In verse 4, Moses begins with the actual command introduced by the word "hear." The basic command is related to, first of all, the oneness of God, which is significant for a people who came out of Egypt, where the gods are so many in a religious system that is so complex and confusing. Jack S. Deer argues, The statement in this verse is the basic confession of faith in Judaism. The verse means that **the Lord** (Yahweh) is totally unique. He alone is **God**. The Israelites could therefore have a sense of security that was totally impossible for their polytheistic neighbors. The "gods" of the ancient Near East rarely were thought of as acting in harmony. Each god was unpredictable and morally capricious. So, a pagan worshiper could never be sure that his loyalty to one god would serve to protect him from the capricious wrath of another. The monotheistic doctrine of the Israelites lifted them out of this insecurity since they had to deal with only one God, who dealt with them by a revealed consistent righteous standard. This confession of monotheism does not preclude the biblical doctrine of the Trinity. "God" is plural ('ělōhîm), possibly implying the Trinity, and **one** ('ehād) may suggest a unity of the Persons in the Godhead (cf. Gen. 2:24, where the same word for "one" is used of Adam and Eve).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> v. 1.

<sup>21</sup> v. 2.

<sup>22</sup> v. 3.

<sup>23</sup> v. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Jack S. Deere, "Deuteronomy," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, Vol. 1. (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), p. 274.

- 4) In v. 5, the people are commanded to love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, and strength. Regarding God's relationship with the Israelites, He did not want their hearts to be divided but to remain focused on Him. It meant an intimate relationship demonstrated obedience to God.<sup>25</sup>
- 5) In verses 6-9, the command is how the Israelites should approach the Word of God. They were to learn it, to meditate on it, to absorb it, and to make it a part of their lives. They were responsible for transferring the Word to their children by teaching it in non-formal settings. The Word of God had to be the subject of their conversations during the day to ensure that the children understood it enough to apply it fearfully and obediently in love, just as God expects in verses 1-3. The idea of this passage is that everyone who is a parent among the people had that responsibility, and those children of theirs, when they became adults, would have the same responsibility their parents had toward their children. Thus, the transfer would continue from generation to generation.

These expectations of God in Deuteronomy 6:1-6 to have the disposition to obey God, with reverence and love, to know Him personally as being unique, to meditate His Word and teach it to others in the reality of life day by day, and to reproduce is the same process of discipleship we see in the New Testament (NT). Jesus requires the same things, "If you love me,

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<sup>25</sup> To love the Lord means to choose Him for an intimate relationship and to obey His commands. This command, to love Him, is given often in Deuteronomy (v. 5; 7:9; 10:12; 11:1, 13, 22; 13:3; 19:9; 30:6, 16, 20). Loving Him was to be wholehearted—with all your heart—and was to pervade every aspect of an Israelite's being and life—soul and strength. Deere, "Deuteronomy," in *The Bible*, p. 275.

keep my commandments”<sup>26</sup> and “make disciples.”<sup>27</sup> The only difference between this and the NT is that the Israelites were to teach their children, while in the NT, they are to make disciples of all nations, including our children.

### Schools of Prophets

In Isaiah 8:16, the Bible says, “Bind up this testimony of warning and seal up God’s instruction among my disciples.” The word rendered “disciples” in this passage comes from the word “*limadh*” in Hebrew, meaning “taught ones,” but many versions of the Bible render it “disciples”<sup>28</sup> while the Complete Jewish Bible (CJB) renders it “those I have instructed.” Either way, those renderings convey the idea of teachings happening in a teacher-learner relationship, although the learner may also be a servant of the master.

### Disciple-Making in The New Testament

The term “discipleship” does not exist specifically in the NT. It is rather an English word that comes from disciple and disciples.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> John 14:15.

<sup>27</sup> Matt 28:19.

<sup>28</sup> KJV, ASV, BBE, ESV, CSB, Darby, GNT, etc.

<sup>29</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Strategic Disciple Making: A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009), p. 34.

## Lexical Definition of Disciple-Making

Just moments before He returned to heaven, Jesus told His disciples, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”<sup>30</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost affirms that, “The term disciple is used in several different ways. Until we are able to distinguish these, we will not comprehend what is involved in discipleship.”<sup>31</sup> The word rendered in English translations “make disciples” comes from the Greek verb ‘μαθητευω’ (*‘matheteuo’*), which means ‘to make a learner.’<sup>32</sup> “*Matheteuo*” itself derives from the Greek word “*mathetes*.” Therefore, to grasp the idea of “making disciples,” it is necessary to study the word “*mathetes*.” According to the NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon, the word “*mathetes*” is used 261 times in the NT,<sup>33</sup> with the meanings of learner, pupil, or disciple.<sup>34</sup> It is used 27 times in the singular form to mean “disciple,” 233 times in the plural form to mean “disciples,” and one time in the singular form to mean “pupil.” The word refers to a relationship between a teacher and a learner, a student, and a pupil, in which the teacher ensures that the student is learning what he or she is passing on.

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<sup>30</sup> Malphurs, *Strategic*, p. 34.

<sup>31</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *Design for Discipleship: Discovering God's Blueprint for the Christian Life*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Classics, 2021), Kindle Locations 37-39.

<sup>32</sup> Robert H. Mounce, *The International Biblical Commentary on Matthew*. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), p. 268.

<sup>33</sup> In Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and Acts.

<sup>34</sup> Thayer and Smith. "Greek Lexicon entry for *Mathetes*". *The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon*, 1999. <https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/> Accessed on March 11, 2024.

The idea of teaching and learning is preeminent in the word “disciple,” said Pentecost.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, lexically, the word “*matheteuo*” means making a learner, a student, or a pupil. Bill Hull notes, “A lexical definition of ‘*mathetes*’ always implies the existence of a personal attachment which shapes the whole life of the one described as ‘*mathetes*,’ and which in its particularity, leaves no doubt as to who is deploying the formative power.”<sup>36</sup> Hence, lexically, the Greek term “*mathetes*” refers, in general, to any type of student, learner, follower, apprentice, or adherent, in relationship to a teacher.

### Biblical Definition

While a lexical definition of “*matheteuo*” and “*mathetes*” can help understand the teacher-learner relationship, it is unclear what is involved in that relationship. In other words, the lexical definition is broad and cannot adequately help us understand what Jesus meant when He said, “Make disciples.” Reflecting on that idea, in his book *Gospel-Centered Discipleship*, Jonathan Dodson expresses, “While ‘*mathetes*’ certainly includes the rational meaning implied in the student-teacher relationship, the biblical definition of disciple cannot be determined by classical Greek usage alone. Rather, the whole of biblical theology and Jesus’ way of making disciples, in particular, should shape our definition.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Pentecost, *Design*, Kindle Locations 37-39.

<sup>36</sup> Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 4. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1967), 441. Cited by Bill Hull in *The Disciple-Making Pastor: Leading Others on the Journey of Faith*, Revised and Expanded Edition. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), p. 74.

<sup>37</sup> Jonathan K. Dodson, *Gospel Centered Discipleship*. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), Kindle Edition: Chapter 1, 29.

## **The Word “*Mathetes*” Disciple**

In the NT context, the word “disciple” is used in many ways. It refers to the Pharisees claiming to be disciples of Moses;<sup>38</sup> it also refers to the disciples of the Pharisees.<sup>39</sup> The same word is used about the disciples of John the Baptist.<sup>40</sup> In other cases, it refers to those who followed Jesus during His earthly ministry and learned from Him, who believed in His teachings<sup>41</sup> or it refers to the twelve in particular whom Jesus called specifically to be with Him.<sup>42</sup> Given all these variations with the use of the word “disciple,” it is important to clarify its meaning in the context of the Great Commission.

### **The Command to Make Disciples in Matthew 28:18-20**

#### **The Context of the Command**

Jesus is now on a mountain in Galilee with his 11 disciples, where he had told them to meet Him.<sup>43</sup> Matthew has specified in that verse the number of disciples present with Jesus, the 11 with Judas now dead. It is worth noting that Matthew’s choice to mention the number is very significant for the subject we are considering. This will be manifested later in the chapter, but now we ought to consider the state of mind of the disciples at the time of the meeting and the response from Jesus.

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<sup>38</sup> John 9:28.

<sup>39</sup> Matt 22:16 and Mark 2:18

<sup>40</sup> Matt 9:14; 11:7; 14:12; Mark 2:18; Luke 11:1; John 3:25.

<sup>41</sup> Matt 5:1; John 4:1; 8:31; 9:27-28.

<sup>42</sup> Matt 10:1; 11:1; 20:17; Luke 9:1.

<sup>43</sup> v. 16.

## **The Shocking Condition of The Disciples**

This is a significant moment where many things are in the up in the air. The disciples experienced a great shock three days earlier when Jesus, their Master and friend, was arrested, tried, and executed shamefully by the leaders of the people.<sup>44</sup> Their faith had been shaken, having witnessed what happened to a Master they knew was naturally powerful, having seen all the miracles He had performed before. An example of that is in Mark 4, when Jesus stilled the storm on the lake. Having witnessed the display of that kind of power, they were terrified, and they asked each other: “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!”<sup>45</sup> However, in Luke 24, the women who went to the tomb came back with the news about the resurrection of Christ. Luke states the disciples did not want to believe. In his gospel, he recorded this: “When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense.”<sup>46</sup>

Though Jesus told His disciples about what would happen to Him, though He mentioned it several times and with some details, they did not picture in their minds that kind of suffering of their Master. They could not conceive the idea of their Master being overpowered by the leaders of the people. Therefore, the disciples were not ready for what happened to Jesus. As a

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<sup>44</sup> Matt 26 and 27.

<sup>45</sup> Mark 4:41.

<sup>46</sup> Luke 24:9-11.

result, they were traumatized. They thought it was over. They had no more hope to the point where they even had difficulty believing the resurrection account of the women.

Although Jesus specifically told His disciples that He would meet with them in Galilee after He had been resurrected,<sup>47</sup> they were unsure what to expect. According to John 21:1-17, the disciples decided to go back to fishing.<sup>48</sup> Even Peter, to whom Jesus had said, “Don’t be afraid; from now on, you will fish for people,”<sup>49</sup> went back to fishing for fish. They probably thought, “Well, the whole thing has fallen apart; we must get back on our feet.” Clearly, in this context, the disciples were not on the same page with Jesus, and He had to calibrate things for them to put the mission back into perspective. To do that, He would give them the Great Commission.

### **The Response from Jesus to the Condition of the Disciples**

Matthew says in v. 17 that when the disciples saw Jesus, they worshiped him, but some doubted. Despite their weaknesses and imperfections, Jesus approached the disciples and spoke to them in such a way that boosted their morale. “While lots of people in Matthew come

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<sup>47</sup> Matt 26:32; 28:7, 10.

<sup>48</sup> “Peter’s word, ‘I go a-fishing,’ is one of familiar discourse. The indicative he uses, as well as that found in the response made by the others, denotes only definite assertion. He declares what he will do in such a way as to invite the others to join him. The preposition ‘sun’ indicates that the others intend to help him. Having originally been fishermen, it was natural that these men, or most of them, should go back to their old occupation.” R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of John’s Gospel*. (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), p. 1,404.

<sup>49</sup> Luke 5:10b.

to Jesus, only here and after the transfiguration, where Jesus comes to the select group of disciples (17:7)," affirms John Nolland.<sup>50</sup> In the same vein, R. T. France states that,

Jesus' declaration and commission, which will conclude the gospel, are introduced not by a simple "Jesus said" but by a combination of three verbs: he "came to" them, "spoke to" them, and "said." This rather fulsome introductory clause not only emphasizes the climactic role of this speech but also responds to the disciples' hesitation: Jesus' "coming to" his disciples is an act of reassurance (as in 17:7), he "speaks to" them to restore the broken relationship, and the words he will now utter will leave their failure far behind, swallowed up in the much greater reality of the mission to which they are now called.<sup>51</sup>

With that approach, Jesus wanted to prepare the disciples for the Great Commission He was about to give them. Earlier, most of them had abandoned Him,<sup>52</sup> and Peter denied Him.<sup>53</sup> When Jesus was arrested, tried, and killed, He knew that would raise questions in the minds of His disciples regarding that apparent failure. Therefore, Jesus took time not only to encourage the disciples but also to emphasize His authority. "All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to me."<sup>54</sup> In his reflection on this passage, Nolland writes, "It seems, then, that Matthew 28:18 is most likely to represent a reaffirmation of authority after the rejection of Jesus by the Jerusalem authorities, which led to his death. Through the resurrection, God has vindicated Jesus, who is now able to freshly affirm his authority."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> John Nolland, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary, The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), p. 1,263.

<sup>51</sup> R.T. France, *New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel of Matthew.* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), p. 1,112.

<sup>52</sup> Mark 14:50.

<sup>53</sup> Matt 26:69-75.

<sup>54</sup> Matt 28:18.

<sup>55</sup> Nolland, *The New International,* p. 1,265.

This declaration of Jesus has its background in the OT, in the book of Daniel, and a previous declaration of Jesus Himself in Matthew 26. It is an accomplishment of prophecy. In his commentary on Matthew 28:18, R. T. France explains,

His ringing declaration, magnificent enough in itself, is given deeper meaning by the recognition that those words were based on Daniel 7:14, the passage which Jesus had quoted in 26:64 as about to be fulfilled “from now on;” then it was still future—now it has happened. This “ingressive aorist” (has been given) thus indicates that “the prophecy that the Son of man would be enthroned as ruler of the world was fulfilled in the resurrection” (Jeremiah, NTT, p. 310). Of course, Jesus already had authority during his earthly ministry (see, eg., 7:29; 9,6, 8; 11:27; 21:23ff.). But now he has all authority, and that word all will be repeated insistently in vv. 19 (“all nations”) and 20 (“all things,” “always”).<sup>56</sup>

After reaffirming His universal authority over everything that exists,<sup>57</sup> Jesus says, “Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations.”<sup>58</sup> In light of the context in which Jesus gave the Great Commission to His disciples, it seems that He wanted discipleship to be a significant aspect in the ministry of the church. Reflecting on that idea, David Platt remarks, “From the start, God’s simple design has been for every single disciple of Jesus to make disciples who make disciples until the Gospel spreads to all peoples on the planet.”<sup>59</sup> A message given by Jesus Christ, in such a way at such a time with such a scope, has to be adequately understood for the response to be appropriate and aligned. Therefore, this researcher will consider the meaning of the Great Commission in the context of Matthew 28.

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<sup>56</sup> R. T. France, *Tyndale New Testament Commentary, The Gospel According to Matthew: An Introduction and Commentary*. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), p. 413.

<sup>57</sup> v.18.

<sup>58</sup> v.19.

<sup>59</sup> David Platt, In the Foreword to *Growing Up: How to Be a Disciple Who Makes Disciples*, by Robby Gallaty. (Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks: 2013), Kindle Edition.

## The Great Commission

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, and to the end of the age.”<sup>60</sup> Matthew indicates that Jesus did choose His words carefully in giving the Great Commission. In verse 18, he says that Jesus came to them, and two other verbs follow. The first is “ἐλάλησεν” “elalesen,” which refers to just speaking without taking into account what was said, like when Jesus healed a dumb man, and He began to speak, “lalein” is used.<sup>61</sup> The second verb is “λέγων” “legon” meaning “to say” but with emphasis on the content, on the words uttered.<sup>62</sup> Hence, Jesus was not just speaking to His disciples for the sake of speaking. He chose His words well because He wanted to convey something specific to them.

## The Meaning of The Command

Four critical verbs in this command of Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20 must be considered carefully. The four verbs are: “go,” “make disciples,” “baptizing,” and “teaching.” To grasp the command of the Great Commission, one needs to understand how these four verbs play their

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<sup>60</sup> Matt 28:19-20.

<sup>61</sup> Mark 7:37.

<sup>62</sup> “ἐλάλησεν” refers to break silence but not taking into account the content of what was said, contemplating the fact rather than the substance; but “λέγων” refers to the matter of speech. The verb originally means “pick out” and hence to use words selected as appropriate expressions of thoughts and to put such words together in orderly discourse. Marvin R. Vincent, *Vincent's Word Study in the New Testament*, Vol. I, *the Synoptic Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, Epistles of Peter, James and Jude*. (McLean, VA: MacDonald Publishing Company, 1985) pp. 148-149.

role in the passage. It is worth noting that only one of the four verbs, “*matheteuo*,” is used in the imperative mood, and the other three are nominative plural participles. Wallace Alcorn upholds, “An imperative is a grammatical mood, which expresses a command. The participles are not in themselves commands, but accompany or are involved in the one command.”<sup>63</sup>

Along that line, R. T. France avows,

Baptizing and “teaching” (v. 20) are participles dependent on the main verb, *make disciples*; they further specify what is involved in discipleship. Baptizing has been mentioned in this gospel only as the activity of John, though the gospel of John makes it clear that it was also a characteristic of Jesus’ ministry at least in the early days while John was still active (John 3:22-26; 4:1-3). It was against the background of John’s practice that it would be understood, as an act of repentance and of identification with the purified and prepared people of God (see on 3:6, 9, 13). But while John’s baptism was only a preparatory one (3:11), Jesus now institutes one with a fuller meaning. It is a commitment to (in the name, is literally ‘into the name’, implying entrance into an allegiance) the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.<sup>64</sup>

Reflecting on the approach the disciples must have in keeping the command of the Great Commission with a focus on the baptizing and the teaching, Stephen Westerholm annotates,

It was on a mountain that Jesus first instructed His followers on the ethics of the Kingdom (Matt 5:1-7:27); so now, on a mountain, he commands them to “go” and “make disciples of all nations.” They do this in the first place by baptizing people of all nations in the name of the one God who is at the same time a Father in whose providential care they may trust (Matt 6:7-13, 25-34; 7:11; 10:29-31), a Son who reveals the Father (Matt 11:27) and who accomplishes the divine plan for the salvation of lost humanity (Matt 1:21), and a Spirit through whom God’s presence and power are made real in the world (Matt 3:16; 10:20; 12:18, 28); and they make disciples in the second place by passing on the teaching of Jesus (Matt 28:19-20).<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> Wallace Arthur Alcorn, “The Great Commission: Disciples,” Central Bible Quarterly, 02:4 (Winter 1959): p. 31.

<sup>64</sup> France, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, p. 414.

<sup>65</sup> Stephen Westerholm in *The New Interpreter’s Bible*, edited by Beverly Roberts Gaventa and David Petersen. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010), p. 657.

“*Matheteuo*,” sometimes translated as “teach,” implies a lot more than that. The word that simply means “teach” is “*didasko*” and it is used in verse 20 as part of what is implied in “*matheteuo*.” The Greek word “*matheteuo*” involves teaching as an initial action but also conviction, conversion, and continuance. It means literally “to disciple” or “to make disciples”<sup>66</sup> in the sense of encouraging and persuading them to become disciples, not forcing them.<sup>67</sup> This, of course, presents a more serious, infinitely more difficult task to the obedient Christian. It is not enough to “teach” or “witness”; we must win those we teach and make disciples of those to whom we witness.<sup>68</sup> Along that line, Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri sustain,

It is important to recognize that making disciples is not reducible to winning converts or ensuring that people get baptized. A disciple is one who listens to Jesus (17:5) and learns from him how to live (11:28-30), how to pray (6:9-13), and how to do what is pleasing to the Father (3:17). Christian discipleship is a total way of life, a commitment to pattern our daily actions and decisions after the example set by Jesus and his most heroic followers (see 1 Cor 11:1).<sup>69</sup>

An interesting point is that the 11 disciples Jesus addresses here in the Great Commission were part of Jesus’ discipleship relationship for over three years. Therefore, when

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<sup>66</sup> Alcorn, *The Great*, p. 31.

<sup>67</sup> “μαθητεύω:”<sup>b</sup> to cause someone to become a disciple or follower of—“to make disciples, to cause people to become followers”. “πορευθέντες οὖν μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη” “go then, to all peoples and make them (my) disciples” Mt 28:19. In rendering “μαθητεύω” in Mt 28:19 and similar contexts, it is important to avoid the implication of duress or force, that is to say, one should not translate “force them to be my disciples” or “compel them to be my disciples.” This might very well be implied in a literal translation of a causative such as “to make.” In order to avoid a wrong implication of a causative, it may be important to use some such expression as “convince them to become my disciples” or “urge them to be my disciples.” Johannes. P. Louw, & Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. (Electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1), (New York, NY: United Bible Societies, 1996), p. 470.

<sup>68</sup> Louw & Nida, *Greek-English*, p. 470.

<sup>69</sup> Curtis Mitch and Edward Sri, *The Gospel of Matthew—Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), p. 371.

Jesus said, “Go and make disciples” to this select group of disciples, they must have understood that the job was to replicate what Jesus did with them. Bill Hull sustains that, “When Jesus told the disciples to go and make disciples of all nations, they knew what he meant: he had taught them by his example, and they understood the principles and priorities they had seen in his behavior. They were to win others to the faith and make more of what they were.”<sup>70</sup> In his reflections on the command to make disciples, Dwight Pentecost upholds,

There is a vast difference between being saved and being a disciple. Not all men who are saved are disciples although all who are disciples are saved. In discussing the question of discipleship, we are not dealing with a man’s salvation. We are dealing with a man’s relationship to Jesus Christ as his teacher, his Master, and his Lord.<sup>71</sup>

Based on Christ's promise in Matthew 28:20, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age,” the Great Commission was given to the first disciples and all the following generations. As a result, the command to make disciples is just as relevant for the church today as it was to the first disciples. To clarify this idea for the church of his generation, Leroy Eims explains, “The commission of Christ to you was to make disciples, not just converts. So your objective now is to help this new Christian progress to the point where he is a fruitful, mature, and dedicated disciple.”<sup>72</sup> The attitude of the disciples on the mountain said it all. “The disciples themselves speak no words in this final scene, where the focus falls fully on Jesus himself; their role is to listen, to understand, and to obey.”<sup>73</sup> This should also be the attitude of the EC today

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<sup>70</sup> Bill Hull, *The Disciple-Making Church: Leading a Body of Believers on the Journey of Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group. Kindle. p. 28.

<sup>71</sup> Pentecost, *Design*, p. 26.

<sup>72</sup> Leroy Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), p. 61.

<sup>73</sup> France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 1,112.

toward the Great Commission, to not only listen and understand but also obey according to the very essence of the command, which is to make disciples according to the model of Jesus.

### **The Model of Discipleship of Jesus Was Intentional and Relational**

To obey the command of Jesus Christ in the Great Commission and produce mature disciples who will love Jesus, obey Him, and live a lifestyle that pleases God in all respects and reproduce, the disciples would have no choice but to work according to the model of discipleship of Jesus, which they experienced first-hand. It is a straightforward pattern. He called them to be with Himself; He taught them as they lived life together. He challenged them to follow His example of love and spirit of sacrifice; He challenged them to count the cost. He challenged them to obey the Word of God; and He challenged them to bear much fruit.

### *A Call to Be with Jesus*

One aspect that characterized all the disciples of Jesus whom He trained and gave the Great Commission to is that they were called. Jesus took the initiative to call the disciples to Himself, and that is attested in all four gospels.<sup>74</sup> In the own words of Jesus, He says He has chosen His disciples. “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit.”<sup>75</sup> It is vital to notice that a genuine relationship with Christ starts with His call. In his book *Call and Committed*, David Watson observes,

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<sup>74</sup> Matt 4:19; 9:9; Mark 1:17, 20; 2:14; cf. Luke 5:10-11, 27-28; Luke 9:59; John 1:43.

<sup>75</sup> John 15:16.

The Christian church today suffers because so many of its members feel that they have “made a decision for Christ,” or they have chosen to join a certain church. Such man-centered notions spell spiritual weakness and unbalance. It is only when we see ourselves as chosen, called, and commissioned by Christ that we will want to present our bodies to Him, “as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.”<sup>76</sup>

The passages in the gospels where we see Jesus calling the disciples also show that every time, the one called responded in obedience to the call by leaving everything behind to follow Jesus. It means that following Jesus based on His call meant showing genuine willingness and obedience to make a total commitment to Him. Simon and Andrew left their nets and followed Him;<sup>77</sup> James and John left their father Zebedee and followed Him;<sup>78</sup> Levi, when he was called, got up, left everything, and followed Him.<sup>79</sup> Dwight Pentecost upholds, “One becomes a disciple in the Biblical sense only when one is totally and completely committed to the person of Jesus Christ and His Word. Apart from that commitment to Him and His Word, one has no right to call himself a disciple of Jesus Christ.”<sup>80</sup> Renaut van der Riet, the lead pastor of Mosaic Community Church in Oakland, Florida, observes in the foreword of Bill Hull’s book, *The Disciple-Making Church*,

In this fast-food, instant-access generation, we have often substituted true discipleship for a superficial community experience and a program-driven approach to faith. These require far less work and a much lower level of commitment. Our churches may grow

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<sup>76</sup> David Watson, *Called and Committed: World Changing Discipleship*. (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), p. 7.

<sup>77</sup> Mark 1:18.

<sup>78</sup> Mark 1:20.

<sup>79</sup> Luke 5:27-28.

<sup>80</sup> Pentecost. *Design*, Kindle Locations 99-101.

numerically, but we are left dabbling in the shallows of God instead of diving into the depths of God.<sup>81</sup>

When Christ calls us to salvation, it is to become His disciples, for He is not about any other business in the Church, and that means responding with a determination to follow Him no matter what.

### *The Teaching Method of Jesus for the Disciples*

Bill Hull pronounces, "Some have tried to argue that Jesus had no intentional strategy. 'You must be reading a different Bible from mine,' I reply. If anything shows clearly in the gospels, it is that Jesus was a man with a plan, priorities, and a goal."<sup>82</sup> In Luke 6:40, Jesus says, "A disciple is not greater than his teacher, but everyone when fully trained will be like his teacher."<sup>83</sup> This passage indicates that Jesus had a purpose in training His disciples. The goal was that they become like Him. For that to happen, Jesus had both a strategy and a lifestyle.

First of all, He taught them the truth of God. The topics Jesus taught in the training of His apostles are many, but for the sake of time and space, the researcher will just mention 10 of them. Jesus taught His disciples the Greatest Commandment,<sup>84</sup> the kingdom of God,<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Hull, *The Disciple-Making*, p. 9.

<sup>82</sup> Hull, *The Disciple-Making*, p. 28.

<sup>83</sup> Net Bible.

<sup>84</sup> Matt 22:37-38.

<sup>85</sup> Matt 6:33.

forgiveness,<sup>86</sup> loving one's neighbor as self,<sup>87</sup> loving one's enemies,<sup>88</sup> prayer,<sup>89</sup> humility and service,<sup>90</sup> the good Shepherd,<sup>91</sup> faith in God,<sup>92</sup> treasures in heaven.<sup>93</sup>

Regarding the approach, Robby Gallaty acknowledges that Jesus had a four-step progression in disciple-making. First, Jesus ministered while the disciples watched.<sup>94</sup> Second, Jesus progressed to allowing the disciples to assist Him in ministry.<sup>95</sup> Third, the disciples ministered, and Jesus helped them.<sup>96</sup> The final step of the training of the disciples was Jesus observing as the disciples served others.<sup>97</sup>

Jesus taught the disciples both in formal and informal settings. One can never imagine how many hours Jesus spent with His disciples, living life and ministering together so that they could learn. For example, Jesus took the disciples with Him to dinner in the house of Levi;<sup>98</sup> He

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<sup>86</sup> Matt 18:21-35.

<sup>87</sup> Mark 12:31.

<sup>88</sup> Matt 5:44.

<sup>89</sup> Matt 6:5-14.

<sup>90</sup> Mark 9:35; John 13.

<sup>91</sup> John 10.

<sup>92</sup> Mark 11:22-24; Luke 8:13-15.

<sup>93</sup> Matt 6:19-24.

<sup>94</sup> Matt 5 and 6; Mark 1.

<sup>95</sup> John 6:1-13.

<sup>96</sup> Mark 9.

<sup>97</sup> Luke 10:1-17. Robby Gallaty, *Growing Up: How to Be a Disciple Who Makes Disciples*. (CrossBooks, 2013) Kindle.

<sup>98</sup> Mark 2:15-17.

traveled with the disciples on a boat and calmed the storm on the way;<sup>99</sup> He traveled with the disciples on the road through Samaria.<sup>100</sup> These are just a few instances among many. As He intentionally spent time with them, they became close friends. In John 15:15, Jesus says, “I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything I learned from my Father I have made known to you.” To accomplish His goals in the lives of the disciples, Jesus Himself removed all the barriers that could prevent a genuine friendship, necessary for the training, to take form. The dynamic He created allowed them to watch His life, learn from Him, and follow His example. By watching Him and listening to Him, they were challenged to believe in God as He did, to love as He loved, to become humble as He was, to know God intimately as He did, to be attached to the Word of God as He was, to become obedient to God and to His word as He was, to become holy as He was, to become righteous as He was, to be committed, purposeful, transparent, selfless, and utterly dependent on God as He was. They were challenged to develop a spirit of sacrifice like He had. Along those lines, in the introduction of his book, Gallaty acknowledges,

We who choose to pursue discipleship need something else: an example to follow—a living, walking, talking disciple of Jesus Christ. We must have someone to guide us along the way, someone to set some footprints in the sand of the Christian life for us to follow, someone to hold us to those footprints.<sup>101</sup>

Discipleship has a clear goal. It is for the disciples to become like Christ. It is essential for us believers to realize that Jesus commanded the disciple-makers to “teach them to obey.”

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<sup>99</sup> Mark 4: 35-41.

<sup>100</sup> John 4.

<sup>101</sup> Gallaty, *Growing*, Kindle.

When a disciple-maker embarks on this journey of discipleship with a small group of disciples, the goal is to help them grow and develop until they become mature believers who obey God willingly, who love Jesus wholeheartedly, who serve God and people in humility, and based on their spiritual gifts received and developed. This is not going to happen by chance. Jesus did not leave that to chance. Intentionality and life examples are necessary. The disciple-makers need to remove barriers and close the gaps so that the disciples can be close enough to watch them and follow their example. The apostle Paul understood that principle, and that is why he purposefully invited the Corinthians to follow him.”<sup>102</sup>

### Counting the Cost of Discipleship

The call to follow Jesus is not like an invitation to go to an ice cream store or to a restaurant where one can eat his or her favorite food. Following Christ on the discipleship journey is costly. We use the adjective “costly” here for lack of a better word. When Christ calls someone to follow Him and become His disciple, He also asks the person to count the cost. “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”<sup>103</sup> The same idea appears in Luke 9:23 but with even more emphasis on the disposition to suffer every day. His call to follow Him means laying one’s life down and losing one’s identity.<sup>104</sup> In his book *Radical*, David Platt writes,

This is where we come face to face with a dangerous reality. We do have to give up everything we have to follow Jesus. We do have to love him in a way that makes our

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<sup>102</sup> I Cor 11:1.

<sup>103</sup> Matt 16:24.

<sup>104</sup> Matt 10:34-37; Luke 9:23-25.

closest relationships in the world look like hate. And it is entirely possible that he will tell us to sell everything we have and give it to the poor. But we don't want to believe it. We are afraid of what it might mean for our lives.<sup>105</sup>

Dwight Pentecost asks if, in all honesty before God, would we have to confess that we have stopped somewhere short of that which is the New Testament standard?<sup>106</sup> Following Jesus means that He is to be first in our lives. In other words, we need to be able to surrender our all to Him, our personal lives, our relationships, our gifts and talents; all our belongings have to be surrendered to Him. Pentecost continues to voice,

Discipleship to Jesus Christ means that Jesus Christ has an absolute right to one's life, to do with it as He sees fit; and, while we have given Him certain rights and allowed Him to control in certain phases, we have retained rights to certain areas ourselves. We are not disciples. Discipleship means that Jesus Christ possesses every material thing that I have, it is His. It isn't a question of what I am willing to give to Him; it is a question of what I hold back from Him that is rightfully His; and until I can recognize that everything I have belongs to Jesus Christ, I am not a disciple of Jesus Christ.<sup>107</sup>

Because of these requirements, many believers do not follow Jesus Christ to become His disciples. Many are happy to believe and be saved without seeing the need to become disciples of Christ. In his reflections on that issue, Walter Henrichsen remarks,

See that man? He is a believer who has refused to pay the price of becoming a disciple. In making that decision, he has relegated himself to a life of mediocrity. Given a chance to be first, he has chosen to be last. To use the words of the Lord Jesus, he is savorless salt. Whatever you do, don't be like him.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> David Platt, *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream*. (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2010), pp. 12-13.

<sup>106</sup> Pentecost, *Design*, Kindle Locations 131-135.

<sup>107</sup> Pentecost, *Design*, Kindle Locations 131-135.

<sup>108</sup> Walter H. Henrichsen, *Disciples are Made—Not Born*. (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1974), p. 40.

The disciples, who became the apostles, grasped that idea. Not only did they stay with Jesus even after those speeches, but they were happy to participate in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of the Gospel. In Acts 5:40-41, we read: "They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus and let them go. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name."

## The Scope of Discipleship

The scope of the Great Commission is found in the phrase “*panta ta ethne*,”<sup>109</sup> translated in most Bible versions as “of all nations” or with an article “all the nations.”<sup>110</sup> The Good News Translation (GNT) renders it “all peoples everywhere,” and the Contemporary English Version (CEV) renders it “people of all nations.” Either way, the idea is that, geographically and socially, Christ wanted disciples to be made everywhere in the world among all peoples. The main idea here is that disciples should reproduce until people of all nations become disciples of Christ. In fact, in John 15:8, Jesus said, “By this, my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”<sup>111</sup> Commenting on Matthew 28:19, R. T. France writes that “the universal Lordship of Jesus now demands a universal mission. The restriction of the mission of the disciples to Israel alone in 10:5-6 can now be lifted, for the Kingdom of the Son of man as described in Daniel 7:14 requires disciples of all nations.”<sup>112</sup> In

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<sup>109</sup> v. 19.

<sup>110</sup> All the nations (“παντα τα ἔθνη [*panta ta ethnē*]”). Not just the Jews scattered among the Gentiles, but the Gentiles themselves in every land. A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Mt 28:19). (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933). “In a number of languages, a term meaning basically ‘tribe’ has been extended in meaning to identify ‘nations.’ In other instances, different nations are spoken of simply as ‘different peoples.’ In certain cases distinct nations are classified primarily in terms of their diverse languages, for example, ‘those people who speak different languages.’ Such an expression should not, however, be used if it only refers to multilingual persons.” Louw, & Nida, *Greek-English*), p. 129.

“In most cases ἔθνος is used of men in the sense of a “people.” Synon. are → φυλή (people as a national unity of common descent), → λαός (people as a political unity with a common history and constitution) and → γλῶσσα (people as a linguistic unity). ἔθνος is the most general and therefore the weakest of these terms, having simply an ethnographical sense and denoting the natural cohesion of a people in general.” Bertram, G., & Schmidt, K. L. ἔθνος, ἔθνικός. G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 2), (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), p. 369.

<sup>111</sup> English Standard Version (ESV).

<sup>112</sup> France, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, p. 413.

the introduction of his book, *The Great Omission*, Dallas Willard paraphrases Matthew 28:19-20 this way, “As you go, therefore, make disciples of all kinds of people, submerge them in Trinitarian Presence, and show them how to do everything I have commanded you. And now look: I am with you every minute until the job is done.”<sup>113</sup> This idea of discipling all kinds of people everywhere in the world does not sit well with every reader of the Bible. France responds to such readers this way:

It is sometimes argued that if Jesus had spoken so clearly, his followers could not have been so hesitant about the admission of Gentile believers as we see them in Acts, but it is worth noting (a) that Luke sees no inconsistency between an equal clear command (Lk 24:47; Acts 1:8) and the later hesitations, and (b) that in fact the debates in the post-Easter church were not so much over whether Gentiles should be admitted as over the conditions of their admission (circumcision, keeping the food-laws, etc.).<sup>114</sup>

The disciples understood the mission Christ gave to them, and they acted accordingly. The same mission is given to the EC today, and the EC needs to both understand and fulfill its mission. Having received universal authority and dominion over all humanity, Christ wanted disciples to be made in all humanity, all nations and people groups, casts and social classes, or existing layers. Therefore, the EC must ensure it is present in all those layers and corners of the world, making disciples for Jesus. This sounds like an impossible task, but Jesus said in verse 20, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Discipleship cannot be done outside of the power of God Himself. So, because of its significance and scope, Jesus has promised His presence every day.

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<sup>113</sup> Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus' Essential Teachings on Discipleship* (New York, NY: Harper One, 2006), p. xiii.

<sup>114</sup> France, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, p. 414.

## The Model of Discipleship of Paul

Although Jesus and Paul do not differ in what disciple-making is concerning the process of apprenticeship for the disciples who have placed their trust in Christ as Savior to grow and develop spiritually, and concerning the goal, which is spiritual maturity, they differ in terminologies. While Jesus often used terms like “make disciples” or “be a disciple,” Paul never used these words. He preferred to look at the process as something that happens between spiritual parents and spiritual children. Greg Ogden signals that “Paul’s writing is sprinkled with images of spiritual fatherhood and motherhood: addressing those under his care as infants and children; characterizing himself as a nursing mother [...] stating that the goal in Christ is to grow up to maturity.”<sup>115</sup> Paul’s philosophy of discipleship appears in several passages in his epistles, but the one that embraces more of it in one place is Colossians 1:28-29, where he “echoes Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20,”<sup>116</sup> indicating once again that Jesus and the apostle Paul are on the same page when it comes to the primary mission of the church. According to what he wrote in Colossians 1:28-29, the understanding of Paul is that the process toward maturity begins with the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ,<sup>117</sup> to bring the person into a relationship with Christ as his or her personal Savior. But it does not end there. Paul sees salvation in Jesus Christ as the starting point toward a goal, based on what he writes in the rest of the passage.

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<sup>115</sup> Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), p. 100.

<sup>116</sup> Ogden, *Transforming*, p. 101.

<sup>117</sup> v. 28.

He sees salvation and growth to spiritual maturity as one package. Hard work has to be done in the middle “so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.”<sup>118</sup>

The admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom<sup>119</sup> embraces the process from salvation to maturity. The phrase “in all wisdom” is significant here because this work requires the wisdom of God to be done right. As He sees disciple-makers as spiritual parents and the disciples as children who will be at different stages at different periods in their development, the wisdom of God is necessary for the discipler to come alongside the disciple properly either to teach truths not yet known or to remind the disciples of truths they learned and needed to take heed of, or to exhort them about something, or to correct them about something. The discipler needs help from God for something like this. The goal for that development process is the spiritual maturity of everyone.<sup>120</sup> This same idea of working with everyone to bring each and every one to maturity in Christ is also in Ephesians 4:11-16. This indicates that, in disciple-making, everyone must be included to work together toward the same goal. No one must be left behind. In Ephesians 4:14, Paul talks about infants when believers are not yet mature, but verse 15 is a different story when they go through the process and are now developed. Again, in Ephesians 4:15, Paul refers to the whole body becoming mature together. Both in Colossians and Ephesians, Paul sees the process as something that is not just the work of one person. He

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<sup>118</sup> v.28c.

<sup>119</sup> v.28b.

<sup>120</sup> v.28c.

uses the plural in v. 28 in Colossians, and in Ephesians 4:11, he shows that Christ purposefully gives spiritual gifts to a team, not to just one person, to build up the Body of Christ.

Paul implies that disciple-making with such a goal to present the disciples fully mature in Christ is weighty on the disciple-maker. After mentioning that the goal is to present everyone fully mature in Christ, which sounds beautiful, he says to this end, meaning toward that goal, I strenuously contend.<sup>121</sup> The New Living Translation (NLT) renders it this way, “That’s why I work and struggle so hard.” First, note that Paul goes back to the first-person singular in verse 29, bringing attention back to himself to indicate what he agreed to do and did to present the believers fully mature to Christ. Pay attention also to the choice of words in the phrase after that. The Greek word “*kopio*” translated contend (NIV) or work (NLT) in this phrase means to engage in hard work, implying difficulties and trouble—“hard work, toil, to work hard, to toil, to labor.”<sup>122</sup> The word “*agonizomenos*” translated strenuously (NIV) or struggle (NLT) means “to strive to do something with great intensity and effort—to make every effort to, to do everything possible to, to strain oneself to.”<sup>123</sup> Paul wants to communicate that he toiled and strove with great intensity and effort to develop the believers and attain the goal. Disciple-making can be demanding, heavy on the disciple-maker, and make the disciple-maker uncomfortable.

The last point Paul makes in the second part of v. 29 is encouraging. This is about the power of discipleship. The disciple-making process can consume a lot of energy, both in

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<sup>121</sup> v.29a.

<sup>122</sup> Louw & Nida, *Greek-English*, p. 514.

<sup>123</sup> Louw & Nida, *Greek-English*, p. 662.

proclaiming the Gospel to bring people to the starting line of discipleship and to develop them in the knowledge of the Word of God, meditation, and practical application, to help them to develop intimacy with Jesus, to discover their spiritual gifts and develop them to humbly serve in ministry, to live a lifestyle that is pleasing to God in all respects, and to reproduce. Such an endeavor requires more than human energy and power. Paul says that it is Christ Himself who works in Him mightily. That is what every disciple-maker need: the power of Jesus Christ. Disciple-makers should never count on themselves, no matter how long they have been doing it and how skilled they are. This divine enterprise aims to transform disciples until they are fully mature spiritually and reproducing.

The reproduction aspect of the model of Paul does not appear here in Colossians 1. But, in 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul writes, “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.” This verse is self-explanatory. Paul discipled Timothy, not just Timothy, but also many others. He wants Timothy to identify believers who show signs of faithfulness and the ability to reproduce and teach them so that they can turn around and teach others. While Jesus implemented His model with only the 12 disciples He chose; the model of Paul considers the development of a whole church, but in his case, a whole team of qualified people<sup>124</sup> to disciple the body and those who were discipled were encouraged to turn around and disciple others.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Eph 4:11.

<sup>125</sup> 2 Tim 2:2.

### **Lessons the Haitian Evangelical Church Can Learn**

Based on what has been discussed up to this point in this chapter, the HEC will be able to embrace the fact that discipleship is not new. It was practiced during the time of OT with great success, although there was not a lot of publicity made for it. HEC can also learn that discipleship is exactly what Christ required in Matthew 28:18-20 and it is a process that begins with salvation going all the way to the disciples being fully mature in Christ; that it is a process required for everyone in the body, not just a few. As the primary mission of the church, disciple-making must be an intentional endeavor of the church. HEC may also learn that Christ had a model He implemented alone with 12 disciples while the model of Paul embraced the whole body, but he did not do it alone. The model of Paul can be adopted with less difficulty than the model of Jesus because it was also implemented in a church context. No matter the number of resources and sacrifices it requires to happen, the church will see fit to make sure that disciple-makers are mobilized, and they understand the process for application.

### **Application of the Biblical Theology in the Haitian Context**

In the area of education and training, there is always a tendency in the Haitian culture on the part of the teachers to just travel along with those students who are smarter, who understand the subjects quickly, and who can give answers to the questions of the professor easily. The same can happen with this process if the disciple-makers are not careful. Since the mandate is for everyone to be developed to spiritual maturity to the point where they can disciple others, no one should be left behind. Everyone must be embraced by disciple-makers, who will guide them intentionally toward maturity.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the biblical understanding of discipleship. In the first section, the researcher considered disciple-making in the OT. Several relationships were considered to show what discipleship looked like, such as Abraham and Isaac, Moses and Joshua, Elijah and Elisha. Subsequently, disciple-making in the NT was pondered. According to the discussion, the word “*mathetes*” was used in different ways throughout history to mean a learner, a pupil, an apprentice, or a disciple in relation to a master. In the NT in particular, and the context of this study, a disciple of Jesus is understood as one who has placed his or her faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, who embarks on a process of spiritual development with a disciple-maker to seek to know the Word of God and practice His teachings with a spirit of obedience and in love for Jesus with the goal of becoming fully mature and to reproduce. The discipleship model of Christ and the discipleship model of the apostle Paul were also taken into consideration to draw lessons to help the HEC become a DMC. Considering that understanding, making disciples is for disciple-makers to embark on a relationship process of friendship with a few new believers in Christ to intentionally teach them the Word of God, to pray with them, to guide them, to model Christian lifestyle for them, to teach them to obey God willfully, to love Jesus, to engage in ministry in their local church. That way, they will not only grow to become fully mature, but they will also turn around to develop other disciples of Christ as it is the expectation of Jesus Christ Himself.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Introduction**

This thesis-project attempts to identify the obstacles to disciple-making in the HEC. According to the Great Commission, disciple-making is the primary mission of the church. However, in Haitian society, the EC has not succeeded in developing enough genuine disciples of Jesus Christ to impact Haitian society positively. The author of this thesis-project would like to discover why by identifying obstacles to disciple-making in the Haitian context.

This chapter presents a literature review, which is a broad look at other published works on disciple-making that primarily address obstacles to disciple-making in the ministry of the EC. Theologians and thinkers have given much thought to this subject through the years. Dietrich Bonhoeffer has given much thought to the cost of discipleship while in prison during the Second World War.<sup>1</sup> Authors like Aubrey Malphurs of Dallas Seminary and Bill Hull have wrestled with the definition of disciple-making by looking at many background materials. Hull has written extensively about discipleship and disciple-making. Authors like Michael J. Wilkinson, David Platt, Wallace Arthur Alcorn, John McArthur, Skye Jethani, Greg Ogden, Francis Chan, Michael Horton, Charles C. Bing, Dallas Willard, Robby Gallaty, George Barna, Neil Cole, Bobby William Harrington, Jim Putman, and James M. Boice have thought about the issues related to disciple-making. Some have analyzed problems with it and offered insight on how to address the problems. Others have proposed working and practical approaches to be successful in disciple-

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<sup>1</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*. (New York, NY: Touchstone, 1995).

making. Someone like Heather Zempel has considered different approaches to disciple-making through the years and even proposes a combination of approaches for her church. Zempel discovered that people are so different from each other, and because of that, no one-size-fits-all approach to disciple-making will work for everyone.<sup>2</sup> In the EC, the abovementioned authors and others have published many books and articles about the subject. However, printed materials on the subject linked explicitly to the Haitian ministry context are rare. Therefore, the researcher decided to examine a few materials concerning the EC, in general, that address issues that look similar in the Haitian context. In the materials considered for this chapter, some themes seem to stick out more than others.

### **The Making of a Disciple**

**By Keith Phillips**

In his book *The Making of a Disciple*, Keith Phillips addresses three questions: What is a disciple? Who is a disciple? How do you make disciples?<sup>3</sup> Based on personal experience in the ghettos in California—where he was very successful in evangelizing but failed to disciple the converts—Phillips argues that one should make disciples, not converts. Having realized that many who came to Christ under His ministry did not continue to walk with Him, Phillips was discouraged. In his discouragement, he discovered where he was failing. The Great Commission

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<sup>2</sup> Heather Zempel, “*Models of Discipleship Throughout Church History*,” an article published on February 1, 2006. <https://discipleshipgroups.blogspot.com/2006/02/models-of-discipleship-throughout.html> (Accessed January 1, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> Keith Phillips, *The Making of a Disciple*. (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1981), p.5.

to the church in Matthew 28:19-20 was not to make converts but to make disciples. As a result, there was a misunderstanding that cost a lot.

Discipleship does not have to be Christian by definition. But to be specific, Phillips defines Christian discipleship as a teacher-student relationship based on the model of Christ and His disciples, in which the teacher reproduces the fullness of life he or she has in Christ in the student so well that the student can train others to teach others. According to Phillips, discipleship is self-death, which is absolute surrender to God and reproduction. The writer also points out that when Christ said, “Follow me,” it was always a command, never an invitation. Therefore, Jesus expected immediate obedience. All that to say, discipleship has never been an option for the believer. Perhaps the most fundamental error many Christians make is separating receiving salvation from being a disciple. When that happens, believers are placed on different levels of Christian maturity, assuming that it is acceptable to be saved without having to commit oneself to those more radical demands of Jesus, like taking up the cross and following Him.<sup>4</sup>

Impatience and desire to see big numbers quickly cause people to doubt the wisdom of Christ on the strategy to make disciples, argues Phillips, whereas discipleship is multiplication. The entire world would be discipled in one generation if everyone understood the approach and agreed to apply the principles of dying to self and reproducing. For discipleship done right is the multiplication of authentic disciples of Christ. It is the only way to produce the quantity and quality of believers God desires.

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<sup>4</sup> Matt 10:38.

Phillips contends that, frequently, evangelism is like giving birth to children and abandoning them, hoping that somehow, they will make it. In the same way, you cannot do that to physical children. You cannot do that to spiritual babies either. Disciple-making is the solution to this problem, as it is seen as inseparable from responsible parenthood. The disciple-maker knows that his or her responsibility continues until the disciple becomes a spiritually mature, reproducing believer. Discipleship is a quality production that ensures that the process of spiritual multiplication will continue from generation to generation. We see four generations in 2 Timothy 2:2.

Phillips also points to the fact that discipleship is relational in the sense that it is a life-on-life encounter. It is not merely a series of meetings or a set course of study. It is a dynamic that offers the disciple-maker an opportunity to invest themselves in another person. There is no set length of time either for the process. Your job is successfully done when you see a disciple of your disciple investing all that he or she is in someone else for reproduction. This means that you not only developed your disciples, but you taught them well enough that they know to turn around and do the same in the life of someone else who can turn around and repeat the process with someone else.<sup>5</sup>

### Critique

It is praiseworthy that this material points to the fact that discipleship is not optional, based on the fact that when Christ said, “follow me,” it was a command. Furthermore, there is no deadline to discipleship, like a set number of weeks or months to go through a series of

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<sup>5</sup> 2 Tim 2:2.

lessons. You know your job is done when you see your disciple making disciples that are making disciples of Jesus Christ. This is a strong point because as an apprentice, it is only by the quality of the disciples' products that you will know whether they are worthy to be released. Phillips argues that disciple-makers must know God before they can make God known, meaning that a disciple-makers need to display characteristics that were in Jesus: obedience, submission, love, and prayer, before they can teach others to display them. This is a strong point, because of the reproduction aspect of disciple-making. When the disciple is fully grown, she or he will be like the master.<sup>6</sup> In developing how to make disciples, Phillips suggests a list of five criteria—a high standard—to select potential disciples to train:

1. They desire to know God.
2. They are available.
3. They are submissive.
4. They are faithful.
5. They seek to become disciple-makers.

He argues that one needs to make sure that you are strict on the criteria so that you can get better quality. We believe this approach can be problematic since all believers need to be discipled, as he argued earlier. Correspondingly, these characteristics must be sought in a disciple, but not in someone who has not yet been discipled. Disciple-makers affinities may cause them to work with a certain kind of people, but if every disciple-maker would try to apply Phillips' criteria, some believers would not be discipled at all.

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<sup>6</sup> Luke 6:40.

## The Haitian Context

In the Haitian context, evangelism is the primary focus of the church. Because of that, the number of believers is high. Then again, discipling those believers has not been intentional and strategic in alignment with the Great Commission. The EC would do well to begin to think about the misunderstanding and develop a comprehensive plan to ensure that every believer in the church is in a process to be discipled. It is going to be a challenge, but it must be done, Chapter 5 will elaborate on how to do so.

### **The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus' Essential Teachings on Discipleship**

**By Dallas Willard**

Dallas Willard reflects on the disappointment in Christian individuals, in Christian institutions as they realize that what they profess “just isn’t working” for themselves as well as for those around them.<sup>7</sup> He believes that the disappointment happens because some significant aspects of the plan of Jesus for discipleship have been left out by the churches historically.

Willard contends that discipleship is not for a few special Christians who stand out in relation to the mass, but for everyone who professes Christ. In fact, the NT is a book about disciples, by disciples, and for disciples of Jesus Christ. He points to the fact that the churches in the Western world, for several decades, have made discipleship optional, on the idea that one can be Christian and even be admitted as a church member without being a disciple. As a result, among the Christians today there are no disciples of Jesus in the substantive sense of the term

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<sup>7</sup> Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus' Essential Teachings on Discipleship*. (New York, NY: Harper One, 2014), Kindle Edition.

disciple. A disciple is supposed to be a learner, a student, an apprentice—a practitioner, even if only a beginner. Disciples of Jesus are people who do not just profess certain views of their own but apply their growing understanding of life in the Kingdom to every aspect of their life here on Earth. But this is not what we have.

Two key missing aspects, according to Willard, are the training in Jesus' commands and the doing all that He has commanded. According to the author, once the church stops this approach of making converts and begins to make disciples of Jesus Christ in alignment with Jesus' plan, the problem will be solved by itself. Although today one cannot be with Jesus in the flesh wherever He goes as it was for His first disciples. In the heart of a disciple there is a desire, there is a decision, and a settled intent to be like Jesus. Not only does the disciple desire to be like Jesus, but he or she takes the necessary measures to dwell in his or her faith and practice daily for the rest of her or his life. It does not just happen for the disciple to become like Christ. Those who refuse to consider the cost of discipleship and to set their heart to follow Christ find all kinds of excuses to not embark at all on the journey. Unfortunately, the price for non-discipleship is greater than that for following Christ.

### Critique

According to Willard, individuals and institutions are facing a great disappointment because what they profess does not match the reality both in their personal lives and in the lives of those around them. The cause for that is that significant aspects of Jesus' plan for discipleship have been omitted by the church throughout its history. He argues that making converts is not making disciples. The two missing aspects are the training in Jesus' command

and the doing all that He has commanded. Willard is right to the point; the Church has managed to split conversion and discipleship. When Willard says there are no disciples in the church today in the substantive sense of the term, it sounds a bit extreme. But since Jesus is no longer physically with us and the world in which the church is operating is different, there is a need for adaptation. However, the goal of discipleship should not be watered down, because the conditions are different. We fully agree with Willard when he says that, although discipleship is costly, the price of discipleship is less than that of non-discipleship.

#### The Haitian context

The HEC is characterized by a shortage of disciple-making; evangelism to bring people to Christ is more emphasized. Where discipleship is mentioned, it does not align with the Great Commission. Theological institutions and churches need to return to the Great Commission to look at all its aspects and work together to change the tradition and implement different models of doing ministry to disciple everyone with their eyes on the goal of discipleship. The Haitian society has suffered the negative consequences of non-discipleship in the HEC, and the consequences are heavy. To stop that and turn the ship around, the HEC needs to start embracing discipleship as it should while understanding that it is worthwhile.

#### **Strategic Disciple Making: A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry**

**By Aubrey Malphurs**

The preparation for making mature disciples and the process for making mature disciples are discussed in great length by Aubrey Malphurs in *Strategic Disciple Making: A*

*Practical Tool for Successful Ministry.*<sup>8</sup> Although Bible churches tend to emphasize just teaching the Bible and everything else will fall into place, Malphurs contends that it is not true. Other churches embrace other missions as well as caring for people, or evangelizing the lost, or worshiping God, of ministering to families. But then again, the biblical mission of the church is to make disciples as this is what Jesus Himself required in His last words to His disciples in Matthew 28:19-20. Malphurs argues that the command was given to the church. Therefore, the church is supposed to be making disciples.

Unfortunately, most churches are not making disciples, according to Malphurs. Not everyone understands what it means to make disciples. There is great confusion when it comes to definitions. Malphurs contends that every believer in Christ is a disciple of Christ, but there are committed disciples and uncommitted disciples. He also indicates that disciple-making must not end with the conversion of the person. It is an ongoing process that encourages the believer to follow Christ and to become like Him. When we become more like Christ, we mature as Christians, which is the goal of making disciples.<sup>9</sup>

For discipleship to take place and be successful, Malphurs argues, the disciple must be willing to grow. It takes the involvement of the whole Trinity, the church as a body to play its role. But if the disciple is not willing and the Christian resists the work of the Trinity, discipleship will not be successful. The methodology the church uses to make disciples has to be biblical. The model of Jesus was that He preached to the crowd, but He poured Himself into a small group of disciples, the 12. He spent time alone with the inner circle, the three disciples.

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<sup>8</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Strategic Disciple Making: A Practical Tool for Successful Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2009).

<sup>9</sup> Eph 4:13-15; Col 1:28.

Malphurs mentions that Jesus occasionally counseled individuals, but one-on-one was not one of the discipleship strategies of Jesus. Instead, Malphurs even remarks for discipleship in group contexts, pointing to one another passage in the gospels and epistles.<sup>10</sup> The early church taught the crowd and its disciples five general truths about discipleship:

1. God's expectation: That they follow Christ.<sup>11</sup>
2. What it means to follow Christ: That they serve Him.<sup>12</sup>
3. How to follow Christ: Selflessly and with a spirit of sacrifice.<sup>13</sup>
4. How they can know that they are true disciples:<sup>14</sup> Devotion to the apostles' teaching, loving one another, bearing fruit.
5. They become fishers of men: Reproduction of Christ followers.<sup>15</sup> The church did disciple-making as the crowd was reorganized through house churches, and one-on-one.<sup>16</sup>

Malphurs argues that if we need to do well in disciple-making, we need to understand two key terms: process and mature. Some synonyms for process are strategy, pathway, path—what needs to be done to move people from where they are spiritually to maturity. For the ultimate goal is not just to develop disciples, but mature disciples. For characteristics of a

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<sup>10</sup> E.g., John 13:34.

<sup>11</sup> 1 Pet 2:21.

<sup>12</sup> John 12:26.

<sup>13</sup> Luke 9:23-24; Gal 2:20.

<sup>14</sup> Acts 2:42.

<sup>15</sup> Col 4:3-4.

<sup>16</sup> Acts 9:26-28, Barnabas and Saul.

mature disciple, Malphurs mentions several characteristics, but a short and comprehensive list is the following:

1. Abiding in God's Word.<sup>17</sup>
2. Loving one another.<sup>18</sup>
3. Bearing fruit.<sup>19</sup>

Malphurs argues that the church will make disciples through the different ministries of the church, like Sunday school, small groups, Bible study, etc. In this approach, a well-chosen staff should be doing the work with an intentional budget. He cautions though that people may be part of all the activities of the church and not becoming mature disciples if they are checklist-Christians who would just go through the motions.

### Critique

According to Malphurs, the main mission of the church is to make disciples.<sup>20</sup> He argues that there is a great confusion when it comes to the definitions and understanding of the terms. He is right! If the Great Commandment was understood correctly, it would have been applied correctly, but it is evident that different churches are doing different things based on the Great Commission and the results also vary. His point that discipleship will happen through the activities of the church like Sunday School, Bible Study, and small groups, if there is an

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<sup>17</sup> John 8:31-32.

<sup>18</sup> John 13:34-35.

<sup>19</sup> John 15:8.

<sup>20</sup> Matt 28:19.

intentional staff with a specific budget, might not be the best approach because that would not favor the apprenticeship aspect of discipleship, nor enough proximity for deep influence. A significant point made by Malphurs is on the willingness of the disciples to grow. If the disciples are not willing to grow, they would not surrender to the Holy Spirit according to the model offered to them by their master.

### The Haitian context

The HEC can rightly be qualified as a church of activities like prayer meetings and fasting, Sunday school, Sunday worship, Bible study, youth meetings. Many people spend a lot of time in such church activities and remain immature. The dynamic necessary to be sure that everyone is growing in the process toward spiritual maturity requires that smaller groups be put together with identified disciple-makers to intentionally encourage the disciples to move from point A to point B in their personal lives. The Haitian church will have to pause and embark on developing this new dynamic.

### **The Disciple Making Church: Leading a Body of Believers on the Journey of Faith**

**By Bill Hull**

In the book *The Disciple Making Church: Leading a Body of Believers on the Journey of Faith*,<sup>21</sup> Bill Hull addresses the issue of non-discipleship in the church. He argues that discipleship should be the focus of every church because God expects every believer to be a

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<sup>21</sup> Bill Hull, *The Disciple-Making Church: Leading A Body of Believers on the Journey of Faith*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2010).

mature, reproducing disciple. However, discipleship has been ignored by the church for a long time, though not on purpose. According to Hull, “the church has preached the importance of discipleship but at the same time taught a Gospel that works against it.”<sup>22</sup>

Hull argues that Jesus did not give the Great Commission to some, but to every believer. Therefore, making disciples and being discipled are not optional. Nevertheless, the contemporary church has managed to present a Gospel that has been altered. According to Hull, “The contemporary Gospel has given permission to the largest portion of the church to simply sign off on the basic facts of the Gospel. Thus, people come to Christ as Savior and don’t see the necessity for them to follow Christ. The journey starts with salvation, but it is a journey. Discipleship is the process to become like Christ after being saved.”<sup>23</sup>

According to Hull, disciple-making involves two things:

1. Evangelism/telling the story of Christ.
2. Discipleship/apprenticeship.

The second aspect requires determination, patience, and investment in the lives of others. The remedy proposed by Hull is a shift from programs to individuals—a careful long-term apprenticeship of men and women in understanding and living the life of discipleship to Christ.

Hull argues that numbers, size, and publicity are not the correct signs of churches being greatly used by God. The church system that has been set up is based on profession of beliefs, but oftentimes, Hull observes, people do not believe what they profess, and worst, the church protects those who profess from the intrusion of discipleship by not requiring any process of

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<sup>22</sup> Hull, *The Disciple-Making*, p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> Hull, *The Disciple-Making*, p. 12.

growth and spiritual development from them. Because it would be asking them too much. The Gospel being preached more often in America encourages passivity rather than an active following of Christ. That approach has had a negative impact on the American church as well as churches on the fields where American missionaries minister. The opposite would instead be beneficial both to America and mission fields.

According to Hull, a church that is not a DMC is not a normal church, because disciple-making is for everyone and every church, based on the fact that Christ commanded it and modeled it, and the NT disciples applied it. The danger now is if the church persists in just evangelizing without focusing on making-disciples, world evangelism is a fantasy. Hull mentions that some healthy signs have appeared, though, on the horizon as some pastors and church leaders have become excited about the discipling movement. Nevertheless, courage and patience are necessary because this requires structural and philosophical changes. That is a major challenge!

To make discipling more acceptable to the established church, Hull has developed a plan to switch from what he calls a Christocentric model to a churchocentric model. This model develops leadership within the congregation, meaning that Christ now works through His followers who have been discipled and are serving as leaders in the church. This approach will have many people take responsibility to disciple others and it will become a teamwork in the church. He proposes five major and necessary changes to effectively use the churchocentric model in the church.

1. In leadership: Moving from Christ's leading the apostles to appointed leaders guiding a congregation.
2. In guidance: Moving from Christ's personal presence to the Holy Spirit's and the ministry of the Word, prayer, and others.

3. In training: Moving from Christ's preparing leaders to a leadership community engaged in multilevel training.
4. In outreach: Moving from Individual evangelism to evangelistic teamwork.
5. In pastoral care: Moving from Christ meeting all needs alone to Christ meeting needs through gifts of the body.<sup>24</sup>

Believing that pastors are the key to transforming existing churches into discipling centers, Hull provides more resources for the leaders to use in leading others to Great Commission obedience.

#### Critique

Hull not only points to discipleship as a must, based on the requirements of the Great Commission, he discusses the fact that it is a must for both the disciple-makers, the leaders, to make disciples, but also for the discipled to be willing to be discipled. There is no other option. This is another item of clarification and implication for the church and individual believers. Hull believes discipleship has been ignored by the church for a long time because they preach on discipleship and, at the same time, they preach a Gospel that does not require people to be discipled. The word "ignore" may be too strong, but a Gospel that emphasizes salvation as an event but does not say much about following Christ in a process toward maturity is non-biblical. People are not saved by the process, but the Great Commission implies the process. The model Hull proposes, and the name given to it may be confusing for some.

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<sup>24</sup> Hull, *The Disciple*, pp. 37-49.

### The Haitian context

Some denominations in the HEC tend to put more emphasis on salvation at the expense of the discipleship process, while other denominations put more emphasis on a process to be saved, which is not discipleship either. Both tendencies are not in the right direction. The Gospel messages need to be in alignment with the implications of the Great Commission to allow people to clearly know that when people are saved by trusting Christ as their personal Savior, they begin the process toward maturity. God expects believers to grow to maturity and it only happens in the discipleship process.

### **Growing Up: How to Be a Disciple who Makes Disciples**

**By Robby Gallaty and Randall Collins**

In *Growing Up: How to Be a Disciple who Makes Disciples*, Robby Gallaty and Randall Collins study the shortage of discipleship in the church and have offered some significant insights to help address the issue.<sup>25</sup> Gallaty and Collins point to the fact that discipleship has not been a priority for the church and even for those who talk about it. They also argue that evangelism and discipleship are being confused with each other. Not everyone who talks about discipleship practices it because of “1) ambiguity about the term; 2) churches do not grasp what discipleship actually is; 3) the influence of the secular world upon believers, causing them to measure success in the church by buildings, number of people and size of budget.”<sup>26</sup> In such a situation, clarity is necessary. Therefore, Gallaty and Collins offer the following definition:

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<sup>25</sup> Robby Gallaty & Randall Collins, *Growing Up: How to Be a Disciple who Makes Disciples*. (Bloomington, IN: Crossway, 2013).

<sup>26</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, pp. 21, 22.

[Disciple-making] is intentionally equipping believers with the word of God through accountable relationships empowered by the Holy Spirit in order to replicate faithful followers of Christ. Making disciples requires equipping, training, and investing in new believers. When people become disciples, they learn what Jesus said and live out what Jesus did (Matt 28:19)<sup>27</sup>

Gallaty and Collins also point to the fact that the church has either brought people to Christ and thinks the job is done, or it is providing new believers with the wrong fuel for growth, or no fuel at all. The problem with that is not on Jesus' side, but on the side of the pastors and their lack of emphasis on discipleship. Evangelism and discipleship are two sides of the same coin, they go together. They are not supposed to be separated. For the new believer does not know how to live for Christ unless the new believer is discipled.

Gallaty and Collins clarify that "Discipleship is a personal relationship characterized by time, regularity, content, and guidance."<sup>28</sup> They also remark that everyone is called to make disciples, whereas to make disciples we must first be disciples. Therefore, discipleship is necessary for everyone. Most of the believers are spectators, and this is not what the Great Commission is about. They address the issue of hindrances to disciple-making by mentioning Steve Murrell's three myths in his book called *WikiChurch* and explain how the Bible debunks those myths. The first one is "the mentoring myth," which is the thinking that only vocational ministers should do the work of ministry. It puts more on the plate of the pastors while paralyzing people in the pews.<sup>29</sup> The second one is the "ministry myth," in which people view

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<sup>27</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, p. 19.

<sup>28</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, pp. 6,7.

<sup>29</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, p. 28.

themselves as unworthy for ministry because of “previous sins, reserved personality, lack of talents, laziness to read the Word, pray or memorize Scripture.”<sup>30</sup> The third one is “the maturity myth,” and people who believe that myth “somehow equate degrees, diplomas, and attendance pins with maturity.”<sup>31</sup> These myths, according to Murrell, are debunked by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:11-13, where he writes, “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure the stature of the fullness of Christ.” The message of Paul in this passage of Ephesians is “the job of pastors, mentors, and leaders is to equip the believers to carry out their God-given ministry.”<sup>32</sup>

Gallaty and Collins argue that changes must be made with no delay, even now, to start discipling people with a sense of urgency. The authors avow that, “Every believer should be able to answer two questions. Who am I discipling? And who is discipling me? Every church should be able to answer two questions. Do we have a plan for making disciples? And is it working?”<sup>33</sup>

While acknowledging the importance of preaching and Sunday school whose purposes are no greater than that of discipleship, Gallaty and Collins encourage the development of

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<sup>30</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, p. 28.

<sup>31</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, p. 29.

<sup>32</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, p. 29.

<sup>33</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, p. 31.

discipleship groups which they call D-Groups to foster the development of believers to maturity. They have provided some guidelines for the D-Groups:

1. It is a small group of three to five. No one-on-one at all. By design, the D-Group is a closed group, in which a person joins by invitation only. Otherwise, it does not work.
2. The purpose of a D-Group is not to evangelize a group like Sunday school. It is instead to make disciples who make disciples.
3. The setting of a D-Group is different also from that of a Sunday school class. It is an intimate, accountable relationship with a handful of like-minded people—encouraging and challenging each other toward Christlikeness.<sup>34</sup>

Gallaty and Collins indicate that multiplication—not addition—is Jesus’ plan for reaching the world with the Gospel. Discipleship is key to that, and the D-Group is purposefully envisioned for multiplication. They remark that “One of the greatest challenges of leaders today is to cut through the programs and traditions to regain a simple focus on the essential mission of the church.”<sup>35</sup> The result of a good D-Group that follows the principles will be growth in personal lives, as well as in the kingdom, in at least three aspects: community, accountability, and multiplication.

### Critique

Gallaty and Collins are saying the same thing others have said about discipleship regarding the understanding of it. It is ambiguous, and confusing. People do not get it even when they are talking about it. This is also something we observe in our context with people who talk about discipleship. They point to the fact that everyone is called to make disciples, but

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<sup>34</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, p. 37.

<sup>35</sup> Gallaty & Collins, *Growing*, p. 153.

disciple-makers are not going to show up, they must be people who went through the same process themselves. Therefore, the church must begin right away. They present the option to develop D-groups with very few people. We believe the idea is great, but in the church context, one might need to have between seven and 10 people in each group to make the number of groups more manageable. Many church leaders and believers in the church do not grasp the idea of success either. For them, success is people, buildings, and money. This, again, is exactly what we have observed in our Haitian context as well. Gallaty and Collins cannot be righter when they say, "One of the greatest challenges of leaders today is to cut through the programs and traditions to regain a simple focus on the church's essential mission." We believe tradition is one of the biggest enemies when it comes to obstacles preventing positive changes from taking place in the church, especially around discipleship. The point on multiplication and the demonstration presented as an example of that multiplication in disciple-making is encouraging.

### The Haitian Context

The approach of Gallaty and Collins in this book does not only help the HEC to wake up, but also point it to some practical decisions and activities, especially with the D-Groups. The HEC really believes in numbers, in buildings and money. It needs to understand that, although disciple-making is slow, when it begins to multiply, it goes faster than evangelism and the church will have both a lot of believers but also mature believers. When the church is made of mature believers, it is strong and can positively influence the society, and this is what would be true success.

## **Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for Producing Genuine Followers of Christ**

**By George Barna**

The failure of the church to produce genuine followers of Jesus Christ who will turn around and disciple others is addressed by George Barna in his book *Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for Producing Genuine Followers of Christ*.<sup>36</sup> Barna begins the discussion with a question:

What would happen for God's kingdom if we did not consider our job complete when people confess their sins and say a prayer inviting Jesus to be their Redeemer, but would use their new commitment to Christ as a launching pad for a lifelong quest to become individuals who are completely sold out—emotionally, intellectually, physically, spiritually—to the Son of God?<sup>37</sup>

As he conducted his survey<sup>38</sup> about disciple-making, Barna quickly discovered much the same things that other authors have observed, that churches have missed the target. Instead of focusing on disciple-making, they focus on buildings, bodies, bucks, and programs.<sup>39</sup> The saddest discovery of that research is that "not one of the [417] adults we interviewed said that their goal in life was to be a committed follower of Jesus Christ or to make disciples."<sup>40</sup> Many people have set spiritual goals, of which many are not measurable, but have no plan or process as of how to accomplish them. Therefore, very few people reach their spiritual goals in the end.

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<sup>36</sup> George Barna, *Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for Producing Genuine Followers of Christ*. (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2001).

<sup>37</sup> Barna, *Growing*, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> In this survey, 417 born-again adults were interviewed across the 48 Continental states in the United States. Barna, *Growing*, p. 37.

<sup>39</sup> Barna, *Growing*, p. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Barna, *Growing*, p. 5.

Others have no passion at all to be godly, or they do not have the disposition to make time for that in their very busy lives.

Barna points to the fact that discipleship is not a program, nor a ministry, but a lifelong commitment to a lifestyle. It is not optional either. Unfortunately, says the author, many people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century church follow Christ the same way he follows the Yankees. Not committed.

According to Barna, disciples

1. Must be assured of their salvation by grace alone.
2. Must learn and understand the principles of the Christian life.
3. Must obey God's law and command.
4. Must represent God in the world.
5. Must serve other people.
6. Must reproduce themselves in Christ.

Without true discipleship, the church cannot be strong and influential. Discipleship is challenged both on the part of the believers and on the part of the leaders. Barna puts it this way,

The chief barrier to effective discipleship is not that people do not have the ability to become spiritually mature, but they lack the passion, perspective, priorities, and perseverance to develop their spiritual lives. Most Christians know that spiritual growth is important, personally beneficial, and expected, but few attend churches that push them to grow or provide the resources necessary to facilitate that growth.<sup>41</sup>

Barna mentions that he heard three different reactions to his findings. One group of pastors and leaders disagreed completely, saying that their people are better than that, although they had no scientific way to measure that. They said they just know that based on

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<sup>41</sup> Barna, *Growing*, p. 53.

anecdotal evidence. A second category simply got discouraged saying that they had done everything they could already and achieved depressing results. They asked themselves, "Why should someone continue to do ministry? There is nothing more that can be done to get something better." And there was a third category that appreciated the findings, because it clarified the nature of the challenges and opportunities facing them. They appreciated the fact that it helped them to figure out where they have fallen short and to know better how to help and what to address to improve.

The natural tendency is to believe that the church is doing ok, that things are not too bad, and we just need to tweak a few things here and there and we will be fine. In light of his sad discoveries, Barna proposes a paradigm shift. He wants pastors and church leaders to rethink discipleship and what it means to their church. For, as the adage says: "the thing that got us to where we are today will not get us to where we need to be tomorrow." To emphasize the need for a paradigm shift, Barna says,

I don't know how to state it more bluntly. The Christian church is failing to live up to its promise; we're not even coming close to fulfilling it. Our nation has a strong economy but a weak morality. People are more interested in faith and religion than in Jesus. Believers are largely indistinguishable from nonbelievers in how they think and live. The church has lost its place at the table of cultural influence. Can we restore the impact of the church through more events and buildings? No. It will take zealots for Christ—individuals who are intractably devoted to knowing, loving, and serving Him with all their heart, mind, strength, and soul—if we are to transform our world.<sup>42</sup>

Barna indicates that there is hope for the church. Although most churches have failed, things are not completely hopeless. There are a couple dozen churches in America that are doing outstanding works in the area of discipleship. Those churches have clear understanding

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<sup>42</sup> Barna, *Growing* p. 10.

of what discipleship is about and create the right atmosphere for that. Beside the fact that they tend to be small—150 to 4,500 in attendance<sup>43</sup>—he noticed nine characteristics<sup>44</sup> they have in common:

- Passion
- Depth
- Maturity
- Practice
- Process
- Interactive
- Multifaceted
- Lifelong
- Christlike

Based on the models used by those churches that are doing well, Barna presents five models that can be helpful to churches that will make the necessary shift to start making disciples. However, having realized that those churches that have done well decided to learn from others and used tools that work from others, Barna offers what he calls a “Best of” model that might help better. That model consists of a list of items and a process. Since every church is different, with different settings, different realities, and different challenges, he is not expecting those models to be applied as such. But a given pastor or church leader might want to adapt one of them to his or her situation.

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<sup>43</sup> Barna, *Growing*, p. 106.

<sup>44</sup> Barna, *Growing*, pp. 108-109.

## Critique

George Barna reports that discipleship is not present in most churches in America. Most churches are failing to live up to their promises. People are more interested in faith and religion than in Jesus. As a result, the nation has a strong economy, but a weak morality. Anyone who understands what discipleship is and its goal will see that Barna is right in his observations and conclusions. If discipleship is embraced right and done right, it produces strong and mature believers who have a positive influence on their communities; as salt and light, they inspire fear of God, love of God, willful obedience to the Word of God, and reproduction. Thus, along with a strong economy, there would be a strong morality. He points to the fact that the case is not hopeless because a couple dozen churches are doing a great job trying to disciple their people. Barna proposes a discipleshift, a paradigm change, and offers an easy to adapt model for application. We believe that once there are some churches that are determined to move forward with a positive response to the Great Commandment, there is hope, because it will gain a lot of ground in time.

## The Haitian context

The HEC, like the American EC, has failed to live up to its promises as well. Haiti has both a very weak economy and a weak morality. The corruption in the country is like a contagious disease. Believers and non-believers have the same regrettable conduct in many cases. Whatever the church was doing in its ministry practices, may need a shift also because it has not produced the expected impact on the society. The HEC needs to adopt a model that works to apply with determination and passion.

Evangelizing and discipling Haitians who come into the EC from the voodoo religion is a significant challenge. The beliefs they hold in the voodoo religion cause them to have views that need to be corrected, which require a lot of work and patience. Disciple-makers must intentionally work with people like that to develop them toward spiritual maturity. It will take knowledge, wisdom, patience, intentionality, and the power of God to lead a voodooist to Christ and to disciple them effectively. Daniel Telfort indicates in his thesis that the Haitian voodooist does not believe in sin, in the divinity of Jesus, in the need for spiritual salvation, nor substitutionary atonement.<sup>45</sup> It will take the power of the Holy Spirit and significant work to bring such a person to Christ and disciple him or her well. Telfort annotates that the Haitian voodooist relativizes important elements in the Christian Gospel that are considered absolutes, and that makes it difficult to effectively evangelize the voodooist. He puts it this way, “Religious relativism as applied in Vodou remains one of the major obstacles to effective evangelization in Haiti.”<sup>46</sup> Such believers must be guided in a disciple-making process in which issues like those can be addressed intentionally to grow to spiritual maturity in Christ.

### **Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time**

**By Greg Ogden**

In *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*, Greg Ogden addresses

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<sup>45</sup> Daniel Telfort, *La Position Du Vodou Sur Le Péché, Jésus-Christ et le Salut: Un Obstacle Majeur à L’Evangelisation Efficace Parmi les Vodouisants en Haïti*. DMin thesis-project, (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2018), pp. 143-144.

<sup>46</sup> Telfort, *La Position*, p. 135.

the discipleship deficit in the church and proposes solutions to fix it.<sup>47</sup> Ogden evaluates discipleship in the EC in the late 1990's to the early 2000's and uses one word to describe it, "superficial." The church was attracting people through evangelism but did not really take the necessary measures to disciple them. Those who professed Christ as Savior misunderstood the implications of following Him as Lord. According to Ogden, the superficiality becomes obvious when observing the incongruity between the numbers of people who profess faith in Jesus Christ and the lack of impact on the moral and spiritual climate of the time. Referring to some statistics from Barna in the late 1990's, Ogden calls the millions of believers "Jesus namers. He puts it this way, "If these multiple millions of Jesus' namers were Jesus' followers, we would not be wagging our fingers in shame at a civilization that has turned away from God."<sup>48</sup> Ogden argues that if the culture is morally corrupt, it is because the church has not done its job to make disciples. He proceeds to offer seven characteristics of mature believers to help evaluate how deep is the discipleship deficit:

1. The priesthood of all believers.
2. Spiritually disciplined adult believers who can take in solid food.
3. Believers demonstrating that Jesus is Lord in all aspects of their lives—heart, home, workplace, attitudes, thoughts, relationships, political convictions, moral decisions, and social conscience.
4. A countercultural force.
5. An essential, chosen organism.

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<sup>47</sup> Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

<sup>48</sup> Ogden, *Transforming*, p. 23.

6. Biblically informed people
7. People who share their faith.

Ogden presents a list of causes he believes are responsible for the low incidence of discipleship in the church. The list he presents is as follows:

1. Diversion from primary calling: Pastors have been diverted from their primary calling to equip the saints for the work of ministry.<sup>49</sup> They are absorbed in other activities that keep them busy and keep believers undiscipled.
2. Discipling through programs: Pastors believe that the programs they develop and multiply in the churches are the means to make disciples. Programs tend to be informational or knowledge-based, while discipleship is relational. Proximity produces disciples, just as Jesus lived proximally to the 12.
3. Reducing the Christian life: We have reduced the Christian life to the eternal benefits we get from Jesus, rather than living as students of Jesus. A disciple is one who, in the context of community, places himself or herself under the shaping influence of Jesus so that there is no doubt as to who is deploying the formative power.
4. A two-tiered understanding of discipleship: We have made discipleship for super-Christians, not ordinary believers. Every believer has the same spiritual objective and is required by Jesus to have the same goal. It is strange that people can affirm themselves to be true Christians while being hesitant about identifying themselves as true disciples of Jesus.

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<sup>49</sup> Eph 4:12.

5. Unwillingness to call people to discipleship: Christian leaders seem to be reluctant to restate the terms of discipleship that Jesus laid out. We are afraid if we ask too much, people will stop coming to our churches. Our operating assumption is that people will flee to the nearby entertainment church if we ask them to give too much of themselves. Since discipleship is more caught than taught, as much model as message, it calls us to a level of self-examination that can be uncomfortable.
6. An inadequate view of the church: We have an inadequate view of the church as a discipleship community. Paul calls the church, the Body of Christ (one body), made of individual members (believers). Our identity as believers is found and shaped in community.
7. No clear pathway to maturity: Most churches have no clear, public pathway to maturity. If making disciples is the primary mission of the church, one would expect some public pathway to maturity in Christ in most churches. Yet it is rare to find a church with a well-thought-out, easy-to grasp process or path which people can take if they want to become self-imitating, reproducing, fully devoted followers of Christ.
8. Lack of personal discipling: Most Christians have never been personally discipled. Since there is the assumption that people will be discipled through the different programs, intentional relationships for the purpose of discipling are not developed. Therefore, the products are very different from what disciples were

supposed to be, according to the NT.<sup>50</sup>

Ogden argues that God's work must be done God's way. Since Jesus decided to invest in a few to ensure transference of His heart and vision to them, Ogden contends this is the approach we need to follow as well to create enough proximity for best results. Discipleship cannot happen in a crowd and without intentionality. The Bible presents the model Jesus used to train His disciples as an example for us to follow. He invites the potential disciples to follow Him—pre-disciple stage—then He lives in front of them, so they watch Him. He plays the role of a provocative teacher to challenge them. He acts as a supportive coach when He involves them in doing ministry on their own, and finally He becomes an ultimate delegator who releases them so they can assume full responsibility. We also have the model of Paul that Ogden calls Spiritual Parenting. Ogden points to the fact that the expressions "make disciples" and "be a disciple" that are so common in the Gospels and in Acts are not found in the epistles. This does not mean that Paul was not operating with the idea of making disciples because he wanted believers to be self-initiating, reproducing, fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. He simply used different metaphors to convey his understanding of disciple making. He saw it as Spiritual Parenting. Ogden puts it this way:

Paul's writings are sprinkled with images of spiritual fatherhood and motherhood: addressing those under his care as infants and children; characterizing himself as a nursing mother, or as a mother in the agony of labor; stating that the goal in Christ is to grow up to maturity (adulthood). Though Paul does not restrict himself to this group of family images, the lens that shapes the primary way he views the process and product of being in Christ is parental.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Ogden, *Transforming*, p. 39-56.

<sup>51</sup> Ogden, *Transforming*, p. 100.

In the model of Paul, the stages are infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

Ogden observes that Paul has different approaches and plays different roles at each stage. They vary from imitation to identification, to coach and finally to peer. The believer who is fully mature, a spiritual adult, is also considered a peer by Paul. Ogden indicates that though Paul's language was different from that of Jesus, he mirrored the process of Jesus.

Based on the models of Jesus and Paul, Ogden argues that disciples are made through life investment. He presents it this way:

It is not a six-week, ten-week, or even a thirty-week program. Instead, it is an intentional relationship. Instead of inviting people to a program or class for which they sign up, attend, and complete their assignments, they are invited into a relationship of mutual love, transparency, and accountability. Of course, discipling relationships contain programmatic elements, such as curriculum, but the relational dynamics are primary.<sup>52</sup>

Ogden argues that disciple-making can be a successful multiplication through triads, which are small groups of three, a teacher and two disciples.

### Critique

Greg Ogden argues that the lack of impact on the moral and spiritual climate of the late 1990's early 2000's is due to a shortage of discipleship. To Ogden, there is a direct relation between discipleship in the church and a society characterized by morality and spirituality. We believe he is right. If the church had discipled the millions of "Jesus namers," the society would have not turned away from God. Discipleship is a powerful tool to keep people, communities, and nations in alignment with God's will as revealed in the Bible. Ogden presents a list of eight causes for that shortage of disciple-making in the church resulting in it being superficial. All of

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<sup>52</sup> Ogden, *Transforming*, p. 124.

these are valuable causes. We believe that Ogden is quite right about the list of causes. Identifying the causes can help to work on addressing them the right way to make the necessary shift. This is a book that can serve as a guide to help a church develop a viable and successful approach to making disciples, and address well the shortage that exists now.

### The Haitian Context

Identifying the causes of the shortage of disciple-making in the HEC can also be very helpful. Theological institutions and key leaders in the church can discuss them and think about how to best address them in places where they are identified. Even when someone would agree on the necessity to return to the Great Commission and begin to approach church ministry differently, with a focus on disciple-making, that person needs to know how to do that. Therefore, the HEC must be provided with a tool, a model that is simple, clear, easy to follow to be implemented.

Disciple-making is a must if we need to have continuity in the ministries in the Kingdom of God. Nationals who take over the leadership of ministries started by expatriates on the mission fields must be people who have the necessary preparation and tools to serve efficiently. In other words, they had to be discipled. Maxime Pierre-Pierre reflected on that idea in the following terms, “In order for Western mission work to exert a meaningful impact and be sustainable after expatriates leave, they must entrust it to people who fear God and have a heart for him, people who have been well-trained in the principles of God’s Word, whose minds

are filled with and guided by Scripture.”<sup>53</sup>

## Conclusion

In this literature review, the researcher has found that several of the resources considered are saying almost the same thing in many cases, while others tend to differ a little. The review can be summarized as follows:

1. The EC is confused about what disciple-making and discipleship are. Different pastors and church leaders would give different definitions. Because of the confusion, many do not even try to do anything. There is a need for clarification.
2. The EC has emphasized evangelism rather than discipleship. Therefore, it makes converts instead of making disciples.
3. There are many believers because of the emphasis on evangelism through the years. But the big numbers of believers fail to make a positive impact on the culture because of lack of discipleship.
4. The EC has presented discipleship as something that is optional, mostly for the few that want to be serious or they ignore it completely as they preach a cheap Gospel to get people saved without having to follow Christ after that.
5. The EC has had a wrong view of success. To the church, success has been buildings, bodies—the number of people they can gather, quantity at the expense of quality—and budget—churches that can operate on a big budget are considered successful.

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<sup>53</sup> Jean Maxime Pierre-Pierre, “How Western Missionaries Can Successfully Entrust Their Work to Third World Indigenous Leaders So the National Church Becomes Self-Supporting, Self-Propagating and Self-Governing,” DMIN Thesis-Project. (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2019), p. 92.

6. The EC has put activities like preaching, Sunday school, Bible study, prayer meetings, youth groups, retreats, seminars in the place of discipleship, assuming that people will be discipled through programs. When the church is dissatisfied with the results, it spends a lot of money to have more activities or to improve the activities, to make them even more attractive to the crowd. Discipleship is different from programs.
7. Churches that at least understand the necessity to disciple, really do not know how, and they get frustrated if they try and give up saying that discipleship is not for everyone. However, Jesus did not give the command to some, but to every believer. There is a need for a clear pathway to be developed at any given church to address this issue.
8. People are too busy doing and pursuing other things in life. They do not have the time discipleship requires or they simply lack passion to be godly.
9. Pastors and church leaders avoid talking about discipleship because of the pressure that might put on them to self-examine and to sacrifice to make it happen. Ministry is less difficult on the leaders without a focus on disciple-making.
10. Talking about spiritual growth or discipleship does not make them happen miraculously. A church must be intentional enough to prioritize it and foster it.
11. Pastors and church leaders do not equip believers for the work of ministry. People do not even know their spiritual gifts. About 80% of members of the church are happy to be spectators while the other 20% is doing all the work, and the leaders accept that.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Ogden, *Transforming*, p. 24.

Churches need to realize that there is a necessity to return to square one, to disciple-making which is evangelism and discipleship, two sides of the same coin. They go together. Once people receive Christ as Savior, they are at the starting line of a long journey that is discipleship. Discipleship is a process to become like Christ, an apprenticeship. It is something that should happen in small and intimate groups put together to work intentionally toward growth in Christ. Based on the model Christ gave, the model of the apostle Paul, and new realities that exist, different models have been proposed. For example, Gallaty and Collins, Barna, Ogden. These models can be adapted to a particular situation so that the ministry leader can be sure that disciple-making is the intentional and primary ministry of the church, as it is the only thing Jesus commanded. There are some great resources available in these materials that can help identify the causes of the problem and how to solve it.

## CHAPTER 4

### PROJECT DESIGN

#### **Introduction**

This thesis-project addresses the shortage of disciple-making in the HEC by trying to identify the obstacles that are keeping the HEC from becoming a fully DMC. Because there is a shortage of written documents that can adequately point to the answers, the researcher has decided to interview several leaders, HTC members, and Haitian society members to find out their opinions on the issue. Thus, the researcher conducted personal interviews with 10 participants to help answer the research question. Those 10 participants were selected from different denominations in the EC and are also people involved in different areas in the life of the HEC.

#### **Sample Demographics**

The researcher purposefully did not select the participants among the pew members of the EC in Haiti but opted for pastors and key leaders who would have a better view of the reality and would be able to provide more thoughtful answers to the questions. Thus, the sample is made of participants who are very involved in different areas of the life of the HEC, with other titles and levels of influence. The sample comprises five pastors, among whom one is a member of the leadership team of a national church federation, and three are on seminary faculties in Haiti. One of the pastors is a senior pastor in the South of Haiti. Because of his position in the church association in the South, he has a broad view of the reality of the

churches of the denomination and other churches in the region. Another pastor serves in another critical region of Haiti and is a faculty member of a theological institution. Another one of the pastors leads a mother church and supervises the ministry in some daughter churches. Furthermore, another pastor is leading a large church in the capital city, Port-au-Prince, and a faculty member of a theological institution. Included in the sample were a pastor's wife, several alumni of theological institutions, a current student of a theological seminary, an academic dean of a biblical seminary, a long-time deacon, and a principal of a Christian school. Concerning denominations, the sample includes three Pentecostal denominations, one from the Wesleyan denomination, one from the Apostolic faith, four from Baptist denominations, and one Independent. There were eight males and two females, all Haitians living in Haiti. Their ages ranged from 35 to 65 years old.

### **Purpose of the Interviews**

The interviews aimed to find out the thoughts and opinions of the various kinds of leaders in Haiti about disciple-making to identify the obstacles preventing the HEC from becoming a fully DMC and how to best address obstacles. All the interviews were conducted in Creole so that nothing would be lost in the conversations, as Creole is the native language of all Haitians. The 10 interviews were conducted separately for two weeks. Because of political unrest in Haiti at the time of the research, June 3-14, 2019, with burning barricades, roadblocks, and limited freedom to travel through certain areas in Haiti, the researcher could not sit face-to-face with all the interviewees. However, the researcher adjusted to the situation and conducted the interviews by using two different approaches, face-to-face with

interviewees that were accessible and via the telephone for the others. Four interviews were conducted face-to-face, and the other six were conducted by telephone. The researcher used his telephone on speaker mode for recording purposes.

During the selection process of participants to form the sample, the researcher prepared a consent form for each participant to consider and sign. The interviewees did sign the consent forms granting permission to the researcher to record the interviews on an audio recorder, whether they were conducted face to face or via the telephone. The researcher explained the process to the potential participants both in a letter and through phone conversations to be sure they understood how the data would be handled and that their identities would remain confidential. The report of the data would not mention their names.

To maintain anonymity in this thesis-project, the researcher has chosen to use the letter "P" for participants, with a number to specify each participant. P1 refers to participant number one, P2 to participant number two, P3 to participant number three, and so forth. The researcher transcribed the interviews on a laptop to be analyzed.

### **The Questionnaire**

To investigate the research question, the researcher developed a questionnaire to conduct the interviews. There were 10 interview questions around five different themes or aspects of discipleship that the researcher was trying to investigate. Those five themes were chosen to guide the questions that would allow the researcher to discover the obstacles preventing the HEC from becoming a fully DMC and how they can be addressed. The questions were formulated as open-ended to allow the interviewees to express their opinions and views

in their thinking with whole sentences, stories, illustrations, and so on. Questions one and two have to do with understanding the expression “make disciples of all nations” in the Great Commission. Questions three and four have to do with understanding the expression “teaching them to obey.” Questions five and six evaluate the current approach to church activities in the HEC. Questions seven and eight address the practices of the HEC, based on its view of success, that favor or hinder intentional disciple-making. The last two questions address the philosophy of ministry of the HEC to see whether it is content-based with an emphasis on curriculum and programs with lots of materials to cover or obedience-based with an emphasis on intentional relationships to foster disciple-making. The document containing the questions used for the interviews is provided in Appendix A.

## **Results**

Since the data collection was done via a series of interviews, the answers provided by the participants through the interviews are also presented in this chapter, organized by the interview questions that guided the conversations.

1. How do you understand the “make disciples of all nations” expression in the Great Commission?

Although there are common themes in the responses to this question, not everyone answered the same way. Sixty percent of the participants (P1-3, P5, P6, and P9) began by saying that the phrase “make disciples of all nations” in the Great Commission is the mandate of every believer because of its context in the NT. It is the responsibility of the believers to make disciples of all nations. Concerning the meaning, 90% of the participants (P1-8, and P10) think

that to make disciples means to reproduce followers of Jesus Christ by doing what Christ did for them to influence their lives, to develop them to bring them into conformity with Himself. As a follow-up question on what Christ did, all the participants essentially said that Christ invited them to follow Him, and they have followed Him for about three and a half years. He taught them many lessons in a very close relationship during that time. He influenced their lives in a very practical way, to the point where they could bear witness to Him by imitating Him in many aspects of their lives and ministry. Therefore, when Jesus gave the Great Commission in Matthew 28, the 11 who were discipled by Him had no problem understanding what He meant. The challenge for them would not be the meaning of “make disciples.” It might only be on the scope “of all nations.”

Fifty percent of the participants (P3, P4, P5, P7, and P9) specified that disciples were to be made everywhere in the world. P3 added that it is a mission with a clear purpose and maturity in Christ, which means, in the process, the believer will have to resemble Christ in attitude and character. Along that same line, 90% of the participants (P1-8 and P10) mentioned that the goal of discipleship is maturity in Christ. P1 stated, “so that Christ and the Father can be seen in the disciple’s life.” For P9, to “make disciples of all nations” means “to share the Gospel with others according to the requirements of the Great Commission, not only around them but in other regions and countries worldwide. That is why we pray for and financially support ministries overseas.” P9 added, “The Gospel has to be presented in such a way that they will grow to the point where they can also share the Gospel by their good Christian testimonies.”

P4 and P7 pointed to the fact that the disciple, having been guided by Christ, will be involved in church ministry. P6 stressed in his answer that a disciple who is guided well will turn around and make disciples who make disciples. According to Luke 6:40, he affirmed, “for a disciple to reproduce is self-evident, because the passage says that, when he is fully grown, the disciple will be like his master. This must also mean that just as his master intentionally invested in him, he will turn around and invest in someone else.”

The tradition is to simply evangelize people everywhere, said P1 and P4. They admitted that they never thought about revisiting Matthew 28:18-20 to look at its meaning until they were encouraged to do so in recent years as they were being trained at STEP. There, they could take another look at the passage in a setting where they were asked to come to it with open-mindedness to see if there was anything to learn or any perspective to change. Before that exercise, they were asked to read a book titled *Breaking Tradition to Accomplish Vision*.<sup>1</sup> According to their answers, they discovered they had not understood the Great Commission well before. P3 also revisited the Great Commission in recent years but at another theological institution in the United States. He added, “Just going and telling is not enough.” Along that line, P10 shared, “Disciple-making is a relationship process to transmit values and encourage transformation. It is a long-time endeavor.” All the participants (100%) agreed that the Great Commission is greatly misunderstood and therefore misapplied in the reality of the HEC.

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<sup>1</sup> Paul R. Gupta and Sherwood G. Lengenfelter, *Breaking Tradition to Accomplish Vision: Training Leaders for a Church-Planting Movement*. (Winona Lakes, IN: BMH Books, 2006).

2. Based on your understanding of “making disciples,” do you think the HEC has made disciples, or has it simply made converts?

The complete sample—100% of participants in this study—thought that the HEC was more interested in making converts than in making disciples, and each participant had at least one argument or anecdote to support their answer. P1 and P2 mentioned it might be the missionaries who brought the Gospel to Haiti in 1817 and those after them who set the table for a wrong tradition to develop, to preach more to lead people to Christ in significant numbers, but not enough is done to guide them in the process of spiritual development to maturity in Christ. P1 remarked that conversion was presented as an event, not a process. P2 explained it similarly but added, “Maybe the missionaries did not do that on purpose. They might have misunderstood the Great Commission themselves. That is why they ensured that the Gospel reached the end of the Earth but did not disciple people.” To support his answer, P3 shared a story about a pastor with whom he discussed the Great Commission. The pastor showed him many empty spots in the pews of the church building that he needed to fill up very quickly. Hence, the goal is not to bring people to maturity through disciple-making. Instead, it is to fill the spaces and have enough people in the crowd. “The HEC is happy to bring people to Christ but is not committed to disciple them and bring them to maturity,” voiced P4.

The HEC has focused its efforts on the go part of the Great Commission, denoted P6, but when people come to Christ, they are not nurtured well. According to P1, much is done in Haitian society to attract people to the church, but not much to disciple them; sometimes, there is no follow-up. In some cases, the existing follow-up is small and is different from what can be called disciple-making. P2, P4, and P5 expressed similar ideas. To point to the fact that

the HEC is not conceived nor organized to promote disciple-making, P2 added that the believers are like children who are unwelcome in their dysfunctional families and are neglected by their parents. P3 argued that disciple-making implies that at least two people, a mentor and a disciple, work together intentionally to foster spiritual growth and character transformation.

The mentor influences the disciple, who learns from him or her by watching his or her life. If the HEC was doing this, our society would not be so corrupt and unjust. P3 said,

It is hard to find pastors who can tell you, for instance, John is my disciple. We have been meeting and sharing our lives for x months or years. He has changed so much, has learned so much, and has proven himself to be a wonderful man and a wonderful learner. He can easily take my place if something happens to me.

The same is true for women leaders. P7 argued much the same thing but also added, “People who are not corrupt, who have good Christian character are so hard to find even inside the EC. It is because people are not discipled.” Reflecting on the question, P10 said, “I think we are just trying to get people to change religions. We are very successful at it, and that is it. The church is not committed to disciple people to bring them to maturity.”

3. What do you think of the expression “teach them to obey everything I have commanded you” in the Great Commission?

According to 70% of the participants (P1-3, P5-8), the expression “teach them to obey” carries the idea of a training process for every new believer who enters as a newborn to the family of God. They are to be put in a system where they can learn truths, not for the sake of learning them or to be able to quote them but to apply them in the realities of life. P2 added, “This is more than theory. It is taking the new believers along, and as you teach them the facts, you model the practical aspects of obedience to God.” P3 explained, “This is something that cannot be done from behind the pulpit alone, as is the tradition in the HEC.” P4 thinks that

“teaching to obey” is “guiding someone through friendship into living the practical life based on the truths of the Bible.” Along that same line, P5 explained, “It is to teach with an approach that goes beyond facts. It is coming alongside someone so that he does what God says in practical life by adopting the right attitudes and dealing with life realities according to the Word of God.”

Sixty percent of the participants (P1, P3, P6, P7-8, P10) emphasized that “teaching to obey” differs from preaching from the pulpit or teaching *ex-cathedra*. It is a system in which the believer is coupled with someone more mature whom he or she can follow and learn from in a close and ongoing relationship. People learn quicker and better by watching others, and if they are encouraged and guided to do the same, they can change, upheld P3. P1 compared the new believers with babies needing special attention and care. The influence the baby gets in the reality created for it in the family is what “teaching to obey” refers to. P9, however, compared the new believers with seeds you planted that have sprouted. You need to take care of them so they can grow into big, reproducing trees. Therefore, there is a need for big brothers and big sisters in the church to care for the new believers. P10 noticed a cognitive part to it, but it is more practical through examples. P6 pointed to the fact that Christ preached to crowds, but, when teaching to foster transformation, walked purposefully with only 12 to invest intentionally in their lives. Consequently, as we talk about teaching to obey in disciple-making, there is a need for the crowd to be split and for many disciple-makers to commit to coming alongside the disciples.

People imitate bad examples without any invitation to do so because of their fallen nature. Nonetheless, if you want someone to imitate good examples, you must be intentional,

patient with them, forgiving them, encouraging them, and modeling for them, in a process that takes time.

4. Based on your understanding, do you think the HEC has taught people to obey, or it has mostly taught doctrine to believers?

Eighty percent of the participants (P2, P4-10) believed that the HEC had not made disciples according to the Great Commission. It has mainly taught doctrine to people. They explained that the strategies that have been adopted and applied cannot be qualified as disciple-making. They brought many people into the church but were not transformed. P4 argued this way,

Some leaders might say that the HEC has been making disciples because there are lots of activities going on, but in reality, it has not. Disciple-making is not about knowing Bible facts, although it is always good to know Bible facts. It is more about the impact of the Word of God in someone's life, who he has become in Christ, and whom he is intentionally influencing toward spiritual growth and Christian maturity. This is what we do not see much in the HEC.

P1 and P3 think that the HEC has not made disciples but has not taught people doctrine either. Their explanations can be blended into something like this,

For it is so common that people cannot defend their faith, or they fall for anything. It has been so easy for the prosperity gospel to enter the church and Haitian society. Where the prosperity gospel is being preached, thousands of people from many different local churches, called evangelical churches, gather, trying to receive a miracle in their favor. Those "evangelical Christians" who gather in great numbers like that are not people who were just out there and not going to church at all. Many are members of local churches, some longer than others, who are weak in their faith and Christian knowledge.

P1 explained, "Someone who was taught doctrine and who embraced those doctrines, before he or she would embrace new doctrines that are not in alignment with the previous ones, would have to be brainwashed first." P8 observed, "We see a lot of zeal and fanaticism in

the church, in people who want to stick with their denominations or to stick to star leaders somewhere, but indoctrination is limited."

Thirty percent of the participants (P2, P3, and P4) argued that it is always hard for someone to get people to practice truths they are not practicing. This points to a lack of modeling. P10 thinks that even though you cannot just dismiss indoctrination because many churches do teach doctrine, ignorance is also huge at the same time when you look at the HEC as a whole. "People cannot apply something they don't even know, let alone understand," sustained P3.

P9 shared that there is a program called Church in Action used by the denomination Union Evangelique Baptiste de Haïti (UEBH) to teach doctrine, but even then, there is a considerable obstacle. The program itself would have been great to teach doctrine to people if they used it, but many leaders do not use it.

5. How satisfied are you with the work of the HEC in the area of disciple-making? Give it a grade on a scale of 1 through 10, and why do you think that is the grade it deserves?

On a scale of 1 through 10, P4 believed the HEC deserved a 1 for disciple-making. P5 figured it should be a 2, while P2 decided for a 3. P1, P3, and P7 believed it should be a 4. P9 and P10 went with 4.5, while P6 and P8 decided for a 6.

While P6 and P8 decided on a passing grade for the HEC, their explanations show they were generous. P6 argued, "What is being done in the HEC in disciple-making is very limited, but it is not nil either. It must be improved greatly before we can find our desired results." P8 stated, "If the HEC was making disciples well, its impact would have been evident in the Haitian

society, as believers have to be salt and light. However, the Haitian society is not impacted enough."

P1, who decided on the worst grade, explained that although there are many people in the HEC, the quality of spiritual growth is inferior because they display the same attitudes the non-believers display. They do the same things the unbelievers do. Division, strife, and corruption are also in their lives, just as in the lives of the unbelievers. To support his decision on a grade of 2 on the scale, P5 argues,

We hear STEP discussing the need for disciple-making. We see that institution developing an atmosphere to bring faculty and students closer together for intentional life-on-life influence outside classrooms. We know the seminary invests financially to encourage its development, but we don't see that elsewhere. We don't know that proximity and intentionality are everywhere.

P2 explained that he does not see intentionality in the HEC regarding disciple-making. He has seen intentionality, goal setting, evaluation of progress, necessary adjustments made in fundraising, building projects, and growing numbers of attendants to fill up the seats, but not in true disciple-making. According to P1, the system needs to be developed to favor disciple-making. The very little that has been done in that area, he believes, was done by accident, or the Holy Spirit intervened to make it happen despite the system.

Forty percent of the participants (P3, P7, P9, and P10) explained that with Haitian society becoming more and more immoral, delinquency escalating, and the quality of life deteriorating, one should question the impact of the church. They believe the lack of effect is due to a lack of disciple-making. P3 added that the crises in the church among the leaders, between leaders and pew members, and among the pew members are also evidence of that shortage of disciple-making.

6. What do you think are the obstacles preventing the church from making disciples according to the Great Commission ideals?

To this question, 60% of the participants (P1-P4, P6, and P10) believed it is a misunderstanding. The leaders do not know what they are supposed to create as they develop churches in the name of Christ. They do not grasp the Great Commission, especially the phrases “make disciples of all nations” and “teach them to obey.” Along that line, P3 added, “Many church planters seem not to understand the church's true mission, which is to bring the believers to maturity through disciple-making for the glory of God.”

P1, P3, and P7 blamed a tradition that started with the pioneer missionaries to Haiti in the 1800's. P1 sustained, “It seems the missionaries failed to tell Haitians that salvation implied also living their lives in a manner worthy of who they are now in Christ, that believers have a new identity in Christ.” P3 argued, “It is based on tradition that they minister to everyone in a crowd, hoping that, somehow, they will grow to maturity. If they attend Sunday worship services, Sunday school, and Bible study, pray and read their Bibles, or have family devotions, either way, it will work out fine, the leaders seem to think.”

P1, P3, and P7 blamed the theological institutions for training church leaders without emphasizing disciple-making. P1 commented, “The church leaders think it is unimportant to disciple, and they can succeed in the ministry without disciple-making. This is wrong! Theological institutions were supposed to play a significant role in opening trainees' eyes, but they did not grasp the idea in the Great Commission either.”

P5 and P10 pointed to the fact that the lives of many leaders are not transformed. Therefore, they cannot serve as role models for anybody to follow. In 2 Timothy 3:10-11a Paul wrote, "You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, sufferings." Paul's life was no secret to Timothy. P10 reasoned that many Haitian pastors, especially those whose names had been in the media for their involvement in political scandals during electoral periods in Haiti, cannot say what Paul wrote. Unfortunately, their lives are not good examples for younger leaders to follow.

P5 claimed that fast numerical growth is one of the culprits. He explained, "In the Haitian culture, the size of a pastor's church weighs a lot on his popularity and honor. So, pastors do everything possible to attract many people into their local churches, but it is just that. They would think twice about the size if there was any plan to disciple them." P4 thought pastors wanted to have a big crowd for financial purposes quickly. It allows them to receive more money in tithes and offerings. The motivation is not disciple-making at all.

P5, P6, and P9 pointed to the unavailability of leaders. It is widespread in Haiti for pastors to not live in the area where the churches they lead are located. They often live in the city while the churches are in the countryside. Either they travel to the churches every other Sunday or every first Sunday of the month so that they can administer the Lord's Supper. Usually, after the worship service, they travel back to the city. Some pastors do not even have such schedules. They lead so many churches; therefore, they cannot be at each at least once a month. Consequently, they show up whenever they can.

P1 and P3 sustained that many churches are developed as if they were theaters instead of churches. The select group of leaders who perform on a given Sunday are the same ones

who perform every Sunday. These are the same ones who serve during the service, visit the sick, clean, and everything. The most significant part of the local church sits in the pews weekly, month after month, year after year, evaluating the services and commenting on their tastes and impact on their emotional moods. People are not challenged to identify their gifts, to develop them, and to use them for the benefit of the body, because the leaders do not mind them sitting in the pews and remaining unchanged inside.

P9 and P10 flagged spiritual apathy because some people know well about disciple-making and the need for spiritual growth and maturity, but they do not care. Therefore, spirituality is no longer one of the trademarks of the church. P4, P5, and P10 also mentioned the unwillingness to pay the price of disciple-making. Whether one wants to mentor someone or a small group of individuals, they are making choices to allow these people into their lives. They will have to make sure to watch their attitude and conduct so that they can be good models for them. They must be vulnerable and accountable to them to teach them the same. Suppose someone is invited to follow someone else as a disciple. In that case, they have a price to pay to embrace the relationship with everything it entails to embark on the journey of disciple-making with a teacher who wants to invest in their lives. Some people do not want to be so close to others and to be accountable.

P3 and P4 answered that there is confusion between the activities of the church and the goal of disciple-making. In Colossians 1:28, the apostle Paul talks about that goal, “So that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ.” P3 said, “The HEC is more into creativity, to develop new activities that last several weeks or even a month, but that is not taking the believers anywhere spiritually.” P4 added that “we have a culture of activity instead of results.”

7. Would you say the HEC is characterized by its concern for developing believers to maturity or by many local churches, but the spiritual quality is weak?

One hundred percent of the participants (P1-10) answered that the HEC is more interested in developing local churches despite their low spiritual quality. The emphasis is more on crowds and the number of churches in their networks, not on the spiritual development of individual believers. Both the individual believers and the churches collectively are not nurtured.

P5 argued that some leaders need a minimum of local churches under them for their status. Some leaders want to be called bishops, so they manage to have several daughter churches in their network. Others develop networks of churches so that they can register with the government as a church association and get to be called presidents of their association. P5 continued saying,

Nowadays, there are many splits. Someone would just go with five or six churches from an existing network and start his church association with them. So, the concern is not to develop a network of solid churches with a system that allows every individual believer to be discipled well. Instead, it is to have some churches out there, with a certain number of people mainly to reach social and political goals.

P7 observed that statistically, we have more churches in the country than we have schools. P7 discussed,

In any neighborhood you go to, several churches of different denominations exist. However, if you look at the lives of the people who go to those churches, they are almost like those who don't attend church at all. The only differences you see are that they own Bibles and songbooks, go to church, and call themselves Christians. However, when it comes to living life in the community, there is no difference at all. The same kind of words come from their mouths as those of unbelievers. The same attitudes are observed in almost any setting that is not the church building or the church area as the attitudes of the unbelievers. The church has a bad reputation these days, and it is

because many people who claim to be Christians don't live like it at all, leaders and pew members alike. This is so unfortunate!

8. What experiences have inspired your answer?

According to P9, some people have a passion for planting churches. They have good motivation but cannot care for those churches. Unfortunately, others who have training, who could have taken care of those churches, refuse to serve in isolated areas. Therefore, many small churches in the countryside lack a trained leader to care for them.

P2 and P10 pointed to the fact that the congregants are weak even in knowledge. Though they gathered in one building, they were very much disconnected. They do not know or realize that when they are saved, they become children of one Father, part of one family, and they must live that out in everyday life.

P1 answered, "In the Haitian mindset, the church is the building. Therefore, many investments are made in the buildings, to build them nice and big, with paint and tiles to beautify them, or at least to repair them in some cases, while not much is invested in people to ensure their spiritual development, to disciple them."

Sixty percent of the participants (P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, and P10) stated the same about a wrong view of success in Haitian society and the HEC. They said success is always about quantity, not quality. The size of your church is the size of your success, which is also linked to financial resources. The amount of money you can generate in the churches says a lot about your success. Along that line, P2, P6, and P10 said that the leaders have selfish goals far from the spiritual transformation of the believers.

P3 and P10 indicated that worship services are more social than spiritual, as they are more performances for the consumption of the crowds. They may go somewhere else next

Sunday if they do not like it. Because of that tendency, leaders tend to please the people as much as possible. People are loosely expected to participate in the routine activities of the church. If they do not, there is no follow-up. Weekday activities are announced every Sunday, but in reality, the church only cares about Sunday Christians, according to the views of 50% of the participants (P1, P5-P7, and P10). P3 mentioned something opposite to the observation of this group. P3 said,

Some churches, especially some Pentecostal churches, have activities all week long, and many people participate. Long sessions of prayer and fasting, night vigils, 7 jumps into the pool of Bethesda, walking around the wall of Jericho 7 times, buying the first stone of your dream house from the pastor, etc. Those things are harmful to families, particularly children who are neglected by their parents who are rarely present for them or are using meager family resources to participate in such activities. This is no disciple-making at all. People are being fooled.

9. Which of these two approaches fits the Great Commission better: An intentional relationship for life-on-life influence, like Moses and Joshua, Jesus and the 12, Paul and Timothy, or curricula, programs, and lessons to cover in classroom settings?

Based on the meaning of “make disciples” and “teach to obey,” 100% (P1-10) thought that a relational approach for life-on-life influence, as Moses did with Joshua, as Jesus did with the 12, and as Paul did with Timothy, fits the Great Commission better. P1 added, “with clear objectives that will allow the disciple to resemble Christ.” P3 and P9 explained,

This is the kind of approach that will allow the disciple-maker and the disciple to create an atmosphere for personal stories to be shared, for intimate questions to be asked, for more learning and growing to happen as they live life together, look at the truths of God together, pray together, and minister together in the Lord.

P6 denoted that the life of Christ was a life of influence. He identified with His disciples so much that He influenced them so closely that some people had difficulty picking Him out from among the disciples. Judas had to kiss Him in the garden for the soldiers to identify Him.

Along that same line, P7 observed that proximity with people is key to disciple-making, as the teacher must model for the disciple in practical life. P10 argued that God is a relational God. He always looks at the heart. Curricula is to be used to develop relationships with God and people.

10. Which of the two approaches characterizes the HEC more than the other? Why do you say that?

The participants believed that curricula and programs characterize the HEC. Covering enough materials over a given period is always the priority in the system, and it may result in something other than transformed lives and Christian maturity. Both churches and theological institutions train the church leaders to use that approach. That way, they emphasized what you know instead of who you are. It does not produce the expected results, but the philosophy has not been questioned for years. P2 argued that Haiti's ignorance and educational system have caused the leaders to do churches that way. In the same vein, P10 acknowledged the following,

Teaching methods in theological schools influence those in the churches. I am talking about lecturing. Some people teach Sunday school or Bible study the same way they preach. They don't take questions. Sometimes, it is because of lack of training they cannot handle the questions; therefore, they simply avoid them. They purposefully avoid the very thing that could have helped with understanding. People cannot apply what they don't understand.

It is not in the culture of the HEC to pair people up together for intentional disciple-making. P9 talked about big brothers and sisters at his local church but admitted that this is not widespread. Other churches he knows do not have the big brothers and sisters approach. P9 also admitted that even the big brothers and sisters approach at his local church is more to ease new believers into the church system and teach them about expected attitudes and behavior, Bible reading, prayer, church attendance, and baptism. Then again, the change of character and the profound transformation we discuss through disciple-making is another

story. P9 concluded by saying, "That is why I went with 4.5 over 10 on the performance of the HEC in disciple-making."

P3 aforesaid that the best curriculum is the one that can be seen in the life of the disciple-maker. People learn more by watching a model. P3 added, "When learners have good models to follow, it is simply amazing." P10 voiced, "I have experienced it myself along that same line. I have seen people who have succeeded in implementing all the programs but who don't maintain good relationships with the Lord. However, the cognitive should have instructed the relationships instead of replacing them."

The relational approach does not produce many fruits at the beginning, said P2. Accordingly, churches, impatient and wanting to see big numbers quickly, do not want to adopt it. It requires too much time before you can see any significant results. He added that there is also the economic aspect of it, the need for big tithes and offerings for sustainability.

P1 and P3 went beyond the question and upheld that most churches in Haiti do not have intentional curricula thoughtfully developed to take people from point A to point B. They do not have strategic plans, set goals concerning spiritual growth, or written action plans. Generally, prominent leaders lead as they go in their minds. Now and then, they would sit down with the elders and deacons to create some short-term plans for a month or two. Traditionally, the plans are made for others to follow. The prominent leaders themselves are free not to follow the plans.

The HEC is not known for its series of sermons in the pulpits. "Most sermons in the pulpits are thematic and preached by different preachers, even preachers who just drop by to visit the assembly are asked to preach at times, and they do," denoted P6. He went on to say

that the sermons are not connected to lead anywhere. He stated, "It is like someone with a hammer hitting nails randomly. One hit here, another hit there." P2 and P3 concluded,

The philosophy of ministry adopted so far by so many in the HEC teaches doctrine from a distance to large groups of people at a time, which is the academic approach. This is responsible for most of the flaws we have in the church. All that gives you is a behavior change, which is not transformation. Anyone can fake a shift in behavior. Real change happens from the inside out, which also lasts. That is precisely why the apostle Paul talks about renewing the mind in Romans 12:2. Believers have to allow the Holy Spirit to undo their old worldview and help them adopt God's worldview. This is the renewing of the mind; through the Spirit, the believer learns to see God for who He is, see himself for who He is, see others around him for who they are, see life for what it is, see death for what it is, see the future through the eyes of God.

### Summary of Results

Before the interviews, the researcher supposed some obstacles to disciple-making in the HEC. Still, participants pointed to other obstacles missing from the partial list of the researcher. Through the interviews and data analysis that shows common themes in the answers provided, the researcher learned more about the obstacles preventing the HEC from becoming a fully and effective DMC along with some ideas for how to address them.

Also, having realized how low the interviewees thought the low level of disciple-making was in the HEC, the researcher asked each of them a follow-up question about their hope for change and their recommendations. All the participants pointed to the division that is obvious among the denominations in the country and the open fights, even in the media, especially during electoral periods in Haiti, to say that it would be challenging to arrive at a place where all the key leaders of denominations would sit down to discuss the issue and to agree to work together to address it. P10 even said that this is close to being impossible.

## **Strength of the Research**

The topic appeared to be very relevant to the church leaders that the researcher interviewed, as it is something most people feel needs to be addressed in the HEC with no delay.<sup>2</sup> All the interviewees in this research—speaking on behalf of those they represent—given their positions, agreed that the church is the only hope for positive change in Haitian society through disciple-making, and this project can help the church strengthen itself to provoke that long-awaited change, intentional disciple-making for spiritual maturity. This research can potentially be a significant tool for church leaders and theological school leaders in the sense that it can encourage them to finally question the low impact of the church on Haitian society and implement the proposed solutions. It can also help address other problems the church and the whole Haitian society may face.

The researcher had a few assumptions at the very beginning that inspired the thesis-project. Notwithstanding, the enthusiasm of the interviewees to participate, the interview sessions, the insights the interviewees shared through their answers and illustrations, and their eagerness to see the final work with the proposed solutions on how to address the obstacles keeping the HEC from becoming a fully DMC were a great encouragement to the researcher to move forward with the thesis-project.

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<sup>2</sup> Vijnonet Demero, “*Enquête sur les Représentations des Leaders Protestants Haïtiens à propos de Questions d’ordre Théologique*,” *Deux Siècles de Protestantisme en Haïti (1816-2016): Implantation, Conversion et Sécularisation*. Vijnonet Demero et Samuel Regulus (Quebec: Editions Science et Bien Commun), p. 137.

## **Weakness of the Research**

Although this thesis-project has significant strengths, it has many weaknesses as well.

The 10 interviews conducted with a select group of Haitian Christian leaders were very insightful and useful for the project. Nevertheless, the researcher believes that, if there would have been more time for that, a survey with a larger group of people could have been done also. Of the 10 regions of Haiti, four were represented among the interviewees. Still, it was assumed that since Haiti is not a vast country, the reality is almost the same in every region and that the interviewees knew what was going on because of their levels of involvement in the life of the HEC; they could speak for all the regions.

Almost no publications on disciple-making in the HEC could be used as sources for the researcher to delve into. Therefore, the task was more arduous than the researcher thought. The researcher wanted to conduct all the interviews face to face, which would allow more learning in context, plus the body language, which could be a plus. However, political situations in the country caused six out of the ten interviews to be done on the phone. Besides, phone conversations are less favorable for follow-up questions.

In their answers to the interview questions, the researcher realized that the participants had mentioned many problems they had observed in the HEC. Nevertheless, the researcher did not ask the participants what they had tried to do to address the issues and bring some corrections.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter consisted of the report of the ten interviews conducted by the researcher.

Evidently, the sample displayed a certain amount of knowledge on what the correct answers are supposed to be and how the HEC was supposed to approach church ministry to develop a strong discipleship culture to produce mature believers who could impact Haitian society.

However, although there are a lot of good theories inside the HEC, obstacles are causing them to be misapplied or not applied at all. The consequence is that the HEC cannot efficiently play the role of salt and light in the decaying Haitian society.

The obstacles identified through the interviews and the discussions and recommendations about how to address them for the benefit of the HEC will constitute the content of the next chapter. The researcher hopes that the lessons learned, and the proposals offered for solutions will help the HEC become stronger as it addresses each obstacle and makes discoveries, according to the Great Commission to impact Haitian society positively to the glory of God.

## CHAPTER 5

### OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSION

#### **Introduction**

The context of this project is the Haitian reality, its history, poverty, complex religious conditions, socio-political issues, and the HEC celebrating its 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary, as discussed in the first chapter. Disciple-making is the primary mandate of the church, based on the Great Commission of Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20. Therefore, making disciples has been a familiar expression in the jargon of the church all along. However, that does not mean disciple-making has been addressed properly, especially in the HEC. The impact of disciple-making is meager both inside the church and in Haitian society. In light of this realization, this project was trying to discover the obstacles keeping the HEC from becoming a fully and effectively DMC to impact Haitian society positively. This chapter is a discussion of the findings along with recommendations to address the obstacles to allowing the HEC to embark on a paradigm change about disciple-making for the betterment of the impact on the church and Haitian society.

#### **The Findings**

The researcher conducted 10 interviews with key evangelical leaders in the Haitian Evangelical community who provided much data. This study was conducted to evaluate the thoughts and opinions of the interviewees and discover the common themes that arise through

the answers to identify the obstacles to effective disciple-making in the HEC. The analysis of the data yielded a list of six obstacles.

1. The first obstacle is that most participants believe there is a misunderstanding of the Great Commission on the part of the church leaders that trickles down to the pews. The literature review pointed to that as well. That misunderstanding caused the HEC to make more converts than disciples. A lot of energy and resources are spent to proclaim the Gospel intentionally, but the spiritual development of every believer to bring them to spiritual maturity in Christ is not approached with that same intentionality and seriousness. This does not mean no church leaders in the HEC are making disciples, but it is not the norm. The “teaching to obey” part manifests a second aspect of that misunderstanding. The church teaches doctrines, so people know theology and Bible doctrines, but their lives do not reflect the knowledge. The lack of obedient application prevents growth to spiritual maturity. The literature review also pointed to a two-tiered understanding of discipleship in that discipleship is for super-Christians, and ordinary believers do not have such high requirements. Thus, the idea that every believer has the same spiritual objectives is missing.
2. The second obstacle is also a misunderstanding of the nature of the church. It is viewed as the building where the people gather to worship on Sundays rather than as the assembly of believers. Therefore, the edification of the buildings absorbs more energy and resources than the edification of the believers. The people of God are the most important. They are the ones to be built up through disciple-making, the ones to be

placed in appropriate small groups led by trained disciple-makers to guide them toward the goal of Christlikeness.

3. The third obstacle indicated by the participants is that the HEC programs do not promote effective disciple-making. The church has developed a reality through Sunday School approaches, worship styles, preaching styles, Bible study approaches, and prayer and fasting sessions that do not promote effective disciple-making toward spiritual maturity. The dynamics of all those church activities do not include the necessary ingredients to allow a believer to grow to spiritual maturity. The intentional friendship relationship with a disciple-maker to allow Bible study, accountability, obedient application on a small team, character development, and repetition of the process with others is not part of the activities mentioned above of the church. This assumes that people will eventually be discipled through the different programs.<sup>1</sup> It does not work that way. For people to be discipled, they must be engaged in an intentional disciple-making process.
4. The fourth obstacle the participants pointed out is a non-biblical view of ministry success. Many church leaders believe that success is defined by the size of the church they lead or by the number of churches they oversee. Be that as it may, they endeavor to increase their numbers as much as possible. When the focus is on size and numbers, the individual believer is neglected, and when the group is too huge, the spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), p. 17.

leaders cannot know their sheep, let alone disciple them. The emphasis is placed more on numbers than on sound quality.

5. The fifth obstacle set forth is the unavailability of church leaders to influence a disciple-making culture. The disciple-making model of Jesus requires time and availability as it is relational and incarnational as much as academic;<sup>2</sup> and that of Paul is the same.

Although one does not have to repeat the same approach of Jesus Christ in making disciples as life is a lot different today. Church development is also different in this new context. To influence other lives in small group settings is such a way for a friendship to be developed, following up in studying the Bible together, in applying together, and serving together requires time and availability of the disciple-makers. Many pastors are very busy, and ministry is done with leftover time and energy. This is a significant setback to effective disciple-making. The change needs to include pastors dedicated to the ministry of the church and effective disciple-making.

6. The sixth obstacle is how theological institutions in Haiti train church leaders who influence the churches. The training programs place insufficient emphasis on disciple-making or a disciple-making mindset. Therefore, graduates of theological institutions do not know that their primary ministry is to make disciples of Christ. Leaders who have not been effectively discipled may not know the value of effective disciple-making to promote it and make it the cornerstone of their church ministry. They will be more likely

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<sup>2</sup> Heather Zempel, “*Models of Discipleship Throughout Church History*,” an article published on February 1, 2006. <https://discipleshipgroups.blogspot.com/2006/02/models-of-discipleship-throughout.html> (Accessed on January 1, 2024).

to approach ministry the way they always knew, with practices that do not favor disciple-making.

### **Recommendations for Addressing the Obstacles**

Based on the findings in this study, the researcher offers some recommendations, which, if applied, could change the course of things for the HEC and Haitian society.

1. The Great Commission must be clarified so that the churches can grasp its nature, scope, principles, practical applications, and the fact that it is the primary mandate of the church. It is not optional. Effective disciple-making will lead to willful obedience to God and His Word on the part of the believers, which will positively impact the context in which they live.
2. There is a need for the church to envision a different approach to the organization of the believers to foster disciple-making. The church must develop into a network of small groups intentionally developed with disciple-makers working with disciples toward spiritual maturity in Christ. That is to be done throughout the weekdays in the homes and other places set for that. The believers must gather for worship on Sunday and then return to the small group settings to continue their spiritual development. Church activities must be used as tools to make disciples of Christ to the glory of God or as a means to an end, which is spiritual maturity. Instead of becoming churchy, Christians

can be characterized by justice, love, grace, humility, patience, forgiveness, peace, faithfulness and integrity. “Instead of counting Christians, we need to weigh them.”<sup>3</sup>

3. Church activities must be planned intentionally to create an atmosphere for effective discipleship. Whether it is the worship services, the Bible studies, the Sunday school sessions, the prayer meetings, and so on, they must be addressed in such a way that they will foster intentional disciple-making in the sense that their main purpose is the spiritual maturity of those involved. Thus, they would be developed in such a way as to cause spiritual development to happen, not assumed, but intentional. Take Sunday school, for instance; it must be re-envisioned to bring every believer involved in Sunday school to spiritual maturity in Christ. That will motivate those developing Sunday school to think it through to create a disciple-making dynamic where Sunday school teachers are trained to teach lessons and intentionally disciple small groups to guide them in their development as true disciple-makers toward spiritual maturity. This new approach to Sunday school will be a network of small groups learning the Word of God together, learning about God, growing spiritually together, their spiritual gifts, and how to develop the spiritual gifts and use them to serve and become intentional disciple-makers who are also discipling others.

4. True success in the ministry is when one sees their disciples making disciples passionately and results are shown in the lives of those disciples through how they live a pleasing life to God. They develop their spiritual gifts and use them to serve the church,

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<sup>3</sup> Dallas Willard, cited by Will Mancini, *Innovating Discipleship: Four Paths to Real Discipleship Results*. (SC: Church Unique Intentional Leader Series, 2013), p. 13.

practice morality, display the fruit of the Spirit in their lives, and discipling other people well. It is when the church is a growing and loving group of people who are concerned about each other and are encouraging each other to stay close to God. Jesus said, "It is finished"<sup>4</sup> and Paul said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith"<sup>5</sup> to indicate that they had succeeded concerning their calling. Pastors need to look at success from God's perspective to focus on investing in the lives of the churches they are called to shepherd to bring them to spiritual maturity. A church in which everyone is discipled well enough to attain spiritual maturity and then turn around to disciple others is the one whose pastor is successful. Regarding finances, church leaders need to learn to think of them theologically and to learn to manage them well. Edner Jeanty states,

A Christian leader will do well to develop a sound foundation for his money management that is grounded in theological reflection. His position should be clear on who God is and what He requires of us, what are the Biblical teachings on money and possessions, and what are his convictions on the ethics of work and wealth.<sup>6</sup>

Thus, that content will be part of the items considered in the disciple-making process.

They will be able to teach their disciples how to view and manage money.

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<sup>4</sup> John 19:30.

<sup>5</sup> 2 Tim 4:7.

<sup>6</sup> Edner Jeanty, *Financial Survival for Pastors: The Role of Money in the Life of Pastors in Economically Weak Countries*, DMIN Thesis-Project. (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2017), p. 106.

5. The work of a pastor is to shepherd the flock, which means taking responsibility for caring for the flock, every single sheep. The pastor is the one whom God has gifted to feed the believers spiritually, to quench their thirst, to protect them, to guide them, to lead them, to defend them, to instruct them, to fellowship with them, to model faith, love, humility, a spirit of service, holiness, fear of God, for them. This kind of work requires a lot of time but also proximity. It is impossible for pastors to do this work from a distance or to ask other people to fill in for them. The pastor must be available for the flock and embrace the ministry with both hands for it to be successful.
6. Theological institutions are key to church development anywhere because they develop the leaders who will shape the churches based on their personalities, Christian maturity, or lack thereof, their philosophy of ministries, and leadership styles. The reality of the HEC today is due to the ministry approaches of leaders trained by the theological institutions. The researcher admits that the responsibility is not 100% on the theological institutions because the theological institutions did not train all the church leaders who minister to the churches. Others, though the theological institutions trained them, do not apply the principles they were taught as expected. However, many churches in the Evangelical community in Haiti are led by graduates of theological institutions of different denominations, repeating what they learned from their professors. Theological schools ought to find the balance between knowledge and obedient application by continuing to pursue academic excellence vigorously but as a means to an end. The theological institutions must position themselves to train disciple-makers, who will develop DMC and turn existing churches into DMC.

The church leaders will not be passionate disciple-makers just by chance. They will have to be trained with that particular focus. Therefore, the theological schools preparing leaders for the churches must set up their systems so that the leaders they produce are disciple-making leaders. Considering these considerations, the researcher believes that among all the identified obstacles, the theological institutions in Haiti constitute the main obstacle to be addressed. If the theological institutions would make the necessary changes so that they produce intentional disciple-making leaders, the HEC would become a fully and effective DMC. Once the church has a harvest of intentional disciple-making leaders involved in developing it with intentionality, the other obstacles will be removed consequently.

#### **Addressing the Obstacles at the Theological Institution Level: An Indirect Approach**

The theological institutions in Haiti must evaluate the output—i.e., their graduates—after being trained for ministry, to determine whether they position themselves as disciple-makers and agents of transformation. They must also evaluate the outcome of their curricula and programs considering the Great Commission—i.e., what is happening in the reality of the ministries of their graduates and the results they produce. If they are not developing effective DMC, the theological institutions will know they must recheck their systems.

#### **Empirical Evaluation of Results in the Haitian Evangelical Church**

Based on the above considerations, any theological institution that is developing leaders for the HEC, in light of the Great Commission, has to make sure that the reality that is created in the school itself, the curriculum that is developed, the programs that are tailored and

implemented, the amount of time set to prepare the students for graduation have to be such that the graduates come out as nothing but intentional disciple-makers. Having been discipled well in the process, these new disciple-makers have a strong conviction that their job in their local church is to make disciples who make disciples, that they ought to make sure the right atmosphere is created, by the power of the Holy Spirit, for disciple-making to happen throughout the whole church system, and that every believer in the local church they serve is involved in disciple-making. If they must come out of the theological institutions with the strong conviction that there is no other option put in front of the church but to make disciples of all nations, they must be trained purposefully.

### **Empirical Evaluation of Impact of the Haitian Evangelical Church**

The outcome of theological education in Haiti, considering the Great Commission, should have been disciple-making, leading to stronger Christians whose lives are pleasing to God, living in obedience to God's Word, loving their God and neighbors, living a life of integrity and honesty, and a blessing to the community in which they live. This would produce more robust and balanced churches that are characterized by disciple-making and Christian values, like sanctification, Christlikeness, unity in diversity, a loving culture, forgiveness, justice, fairness, humility, joy, peace, self-control, etc. The outcome of theological education must be,

- That every believer is discipled and growing to maturity, according to the requirements of the Great Commission.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Matt 28:19-20; Col 1:28.

- That every believer is connected to a local church and is plugged into a body-like dynamic that allows everyone to not only identify his or her gifts but also to develop them and put them to use for the benefit of the whole body, according to 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4: 11-16.
- That every disciple becomes a disciple-maker who considers Jesus's strategy given in Matthew 28:18-20, Ephesians 4: 11-16; 2 Timothy 2:2; Colossians 1:28-29. For a disciple to become a disciple-maker, it can take two to three years of intentional discipleship.
- That the church is an assembly of true disciples of Jesus Christ who are on the way to resembling Him.
- That the quality of the EC is improved in the sense that the church is strong spiritually because of disciple-making is displaying the love of God toward the community, harmony, and justice, and is having a positive impact on the Haitian society.

In the other hand, it is clear from the interviews that there is a shortage of disciple-making in the HEC. This shortage suggests that the output has not been disciples who develop DMC with the abovementioned qualities. Therefore, the problem is that the systems now in place to prepare leaders for the churches have flaws to be addressed. If theological schools continue to do the same things they did before, they will see the same output and outcome that do not produce the expected impact in the church and Haitian society. It all boils down to the curriculum. Reflecting along that line, Perry Shaw writes,

Before beginning curriculum planning, we need to ask ourselves: why exactly do we exist, and what are we trying to accomplish anyway? The Bologna Process for European

higher education coined the phrases “Fitness of Purpose” and “Fitness for Purpose” (ENQA 2009). Any effective educational program must first establish an appropriate self-understanding of why it exists—in other words, a fit purpose. Once this is in place, the institution and its curriculum should then be shaped to best fulfill that purpose.<sup>8</sup>

Instead of blaming the believers for their lack of growth and criticizing flaws in the ministry approaches of church leaders resulting in immature churches, the theological institutions in Haiti would render a greater service to themselves and the churches they are serving through the training programs by focusing more on curriculum. The theological institutions must take a step back and evaluate themselves to find out where exactly the problem is. Suppose the leaders who are the products of theological institutions are not developing DMC to impact Haitian society positively. In that case, it may be because the schools have some system flaws. Otherwise, the leaders would have emerged from the training programs as disciple-makers. The focus is placed to some extent on theological institutions here because of their key position of influence through the leaders of the HEC. Still, the same focus can also be directly on the churches and other Christian organizations. Notwithstanding, churches and Christian organizations are generally directly or indirectly under the influence of pastors trained at the theological institutions. Admittedly, the result will not be 100% positive, no matter what the theological institutions do or how intentional they are. Jesus Himself discipled 12, and Judas Iscariot chose to betray Him.

Based on that idea, the researcher offers a step-by-step approach to help theological institutions address the problem and create a culture of disciple-making to develop intentional

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<sup>8</sup> Perry Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education: A Practical Handbook for Integrative Learning*. (Langham Global Library, 2014, Kindle Edition), Kindle Locations 623-626.

disciple-makers in their training programs who will intentionally develop disciple-making churches.

### **How a Seminary Prepares Leaders Who Can Effectively Disciple:**

#### **A Proposed Process for Change at the Theological Institution Level**

This plan was adapted from a focus group conducted at STEP after the earthquake of 2010 in Haiti. The exercise led STEP to make radical decisions about the curriculum, the desired culture, the hidden curriculum, and intentionality in its practical approaches to training its students. STEP has not yet done a scientific study on the impact of the new approach. However, we have observed positive results in the lives of those intentionally discipled during their training. Disciple-making has not yet become the culture of the school but is gradually developing. Therefore, the researcher believes it might help other schools go through a similar process to create change.

The focus group comprised a small group of professors at STEP, a small group of short-term American missionaries from the Evangelical Free Church of America (EFCA), and two American missionaries who had been on the STEP faculty for decades. There were about 12 to 15 people every time we met. We held several meetings to discuss questions regarding the dire situation in Haiti, the role of the church, its impact or lack thereof, the causes, and what might be the solutions. We did not record the discussion in such a way that they would be published, but the author of this thesis-project took some personal notes.

As discussed above, theological institutions must address internal issues related to their make-ups and ways of developing and implementing curricula and programs to ensure better output and outcomes. Telling someone to do something is one thing, but the know-how can be confusing, just as it has been with disciple-making in the HEC. To avoid any confusion, the researcher offers the following process.

### Prayer

The leadership team of the theological institutions must begin with prayer. Pray for God to open the eyes of key leaders of the institution so that they can realize the need for change, that they will be determined to support it instead of resisting it, to lead them to the best people on the team who can play a good role in the change process. Pray for wisdom, patience, courage, and inspiration from God. Pray for strength, determination, and perseverance. Pray for victory over spiritual and material opposition. Change can face all kinds of opposition. Pray for endurance and perseverance.

### Leading the Process

It is best if the senior leader in the system takes the initiative to develop the group and lead it if he or she is qualified. If not, the senior leader could commission another influential leader to lead the change process. Otherwise, the institution will need to bring in an expert who can consult with the institution through the process. This is such an important step; it must not be taken lightly. Therefore, if an outside expert is necessary, it would be good to bring that person in, even if there will be a cost. It will be worth it.

## Developing a Select Group of Open-Minded Stakeholders

Long-term change requires intentionality and focus. As a result, a focus group needs to be developed with some criteria to keep it together and play its role in brainstorming on everything related to the change process by asking the right questions and wrestling with them to generate answers about what to do and how. Identify individuals in the system at different levels of influence to be in the select group, for these are your internal champions of change. A theological institution can have one or two board members, members of the leadership team, faculty members, alumni who serve as pastors of local churches in Haiti, and foreign missionaries among whom they can have some years of ministry experience in Haiti and others who freshly arrived. It is precious to have people coming from the outside looking in, if they are open-minded and willing to champion the change.

Those who are targeted for the group should know upfront what its activities are going to be, how it is going to happen, have an idea about the kind of evaluation questions that will be on the table for discussion, the amount of freedom they will have to speak honestly and constructively, and the fact that they may have to meet for long hours and over several months. This is an exercise that will take time to be done well.

It must be manageable in a select group of 15 to 20 people. To be invited to the group, the leader has to be open-minded, someone who would not mind questioning respectfully why the institution does what it does and the way it does. Or whether what the institution says it exists to accomplish is being accomplished, and questions like about vision, mission, philosophy, the practices, the well-loved traditions of the institution that have been established

for years, the values, the output, the outcome, impacts or lack of. They must agree to provide healthy criticism of the practices and the results they produce or do not produce. They should be honest and agree to be vulnerable, as this kind of exercise can potentially embarrass the participants who are also players on the school team, the church team, or the team of the Christian organization. They need to know that, while the exercise can be awkward, it is necessary and useful because it can open the door for significant changes in their system for better success. It can help them make necessary corrections in something with great eternal value. The huge risk of not doing that exercise is that they would keep on doing the same things they had been doing before, in the same way, and get the same results. What people know to do is always what they do, but it does not always produce the expected results. Perry Shaw puts it this way:

It is difficult for us to break out of traditional patterns with which we are familiar, and we are all prone to teach as we have learned and to develop schools along the models of the schools where we were trained. Consequently, there are scattered across the globe a plethora of little Trinitys, Fullers, Dallases, Princetons, and occasionally Oxfords, Edinburghs and Tubingens—despite the fact that these models are generally irrelevant to the context of the Middle East, Africa, Asia or Latin America. It could even be argued that these classic models are no longer relevant in the contemporary contexts of the Western world.<sup>9</sup>

If theological schools continue to prepare leaders in the same ways they used to prepare them, they will continue to develop the churches in the same ways they used to. The dynamic of the HEC would, therefore, remain the same, and the problem of the shortage of disciple-making would remain the same, and the positive impact on Haitian society would still

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<sup>9</sup> Perry Shaw, *Transforming Theological Education: A Practical Handbook for Integrative Learning* (ICETE Series) Langham Creative Projects. Kindle Edition. p. 40.

be lacking. This is a risk that must not be taken. Disciple-making must be developed in the HEC by disciple-making pastors who have a duty to be prepared as such by the theological schools they attend.

### Creating a Sense of Urgency

The focus group leader<sup>10</sup> will put questions in front of the group and guide the discussions so that they discover that, for the conditions of Haiti to change, the HEC must play a significant role in the process. However, the kind of EC currently cannot do that job because of its weaknesses. A church that is stronger and more spiritually mature because its members have been discipled has to do this job. It is a DMC made of disciple-makers who know their gifts and have developed them, disciples who are involved in the life of the church at all levels according to their recognized gifts, and serving in humility is the one that can positively impact Haitian society. A church like that will not come into being by chance. The church leaders produced by the theological institutions will have to develop that kind of church, and for them to have the right capacity for that job, they need to be discipled in their preparation. Accordingly, theological institutions in Haiti should be set up, like a machine in a factory, in such a way that those who enter them are discipled and come out at the end of their time of studies as disciple-makers who make disciple-makers, as leaders who understand that the focus they must have as pastors, or whatever roles they have in a local church, must be on disciple-

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<sup>10</sup> The leader of the group is in that role because that person has already demonstrated understanding of the vision of a disciple-making Church and a passion for it.

making. The group must be guided slowly and patiently until they realize the need for change and develop their conviction.

The leader may also want to introduce them to the book *Breaking Traditions to Accomplish Vision*.<sup>11</sup> This book is a case study on the Hindustan Bible Institute (HBI) in India, which had a vision to train pastors for church planting. As time passed, HBI had lost its vision. The book tells how HBI dismantled and rebuilt its program to return to the vision. By reading this book, they will realize that they are not the only ones who may have to change to get back on track and produce better results in the Kingdom of God. That may encourage them.

### Clarifying the Vision and the Mission

The vision of an institution is its destination. It shows what you want to see when everything is done. It is always better to include as many stakeholders as possible in the discussion around the vision because you want everyone to feel they own the vision and the mission when they are crafted. There is a vast difference between an owner and a tenant. The owner will have the disposition to sacrifice for the vision and mission to be fulfilled, but people who see themselves implementing the vision of the owner would not have the same disposition. Prayer is necessary throughout the process, but here even more so because vision and mission are important to drive the institution.

The mission itself is the reason why the institution is committed to accomplishing the vision. It is why the institution exists. It is why the institution does what it does toward the

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<sup>11</sup> Paul R. Gupta & Sherwood G. Lengenfelter, *Breaking Tradition to Accomplish Vision: Training Leaders for a Church-Planting Movement-A Case from India*. (Winona Lake, IN: BHM Books, 2006).

fulfillment of the vision. At this point, if there was not one already, a consultant is needed to help revise the vision and mission of the institution for the stakeholders to evaluate their commitments and make decisions to support them or to walk away. The vision and mission of the institution must be clear for everyone so that they all can have the same understanding about them to work in alignment with each other. Clarification is key for the team to be strong enough to accomplish the vision. Otherwise, for 10 different people, there may be 10 different visions, which would easily create disaster. If some are not on the same page, the leader may conduct a session on clarification, maybe by adding a statement about disciple-making.

Stakeholders are not supposed to be guessing about the identity of the institution and what it is trying to accomplish. Therefore, the right questions must be asked, and everyone should express themselves about the identity of the institution, its vision, and its mission. These aspects need to be clear for everyone. They must be understood and kept close by everyone, from the board, the CEO, the staff, to the very last person involved in the life of the institution. In other words, as a theological school, once the vision and mission are clarified, they need to be communicated and understood by the board, the leadership team, the faculty, the staff, the students, the churches connected to the institution, all the partners, foreigners, and nationals.

### The Identity and the Culture of the Institution

Besides vision and mission, the whole identity of the institution must be developed, clarified, and communicated. Tim Addington's book, *Leading from the Sandbox*,<sup>12</sup> can greatly

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<sup>12</sup> T. J. Addington, *Leading from the Sandbox: How to Develop, Empower, and Release High-Impact Ministry Teams*. (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010).

guide that particular exercise. The team members can read that book, or the leader can summarize it as it helps to understand the vision, mission, core drivers, values, and culture. This is where the team could look at the personality of the institution and check whether or not it is ideal. Also, every institution has a culture. It can be a culture that is characterized by excellence, trust in God, hard work, telling the truth, justice, love, and mutual respect, or it can be the opposite, like deception, distrust, corruption, injustice, lack of fairness, inequality, materialism, and abuse. “Culture is positive or negative, never neutral. Leaders must be acutely aware of the culture of their organizations.”<sup>13</sup>

### The Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of an institution have to do with how the institution is committed to operating—why we do what we do as an institution.<sup>14</sup> These guiding principles intend to:

- Keep the institution small or to develop it to make it big.
  - Grow the student body or to keep it small.
  - Encourage proximity among the faculty and students or to maintain protocol and distance.
  - Come down to where the students are to help them grow to maturity and excellence
- Require the students to do their best to reach the required level, otherwise they will be dismissed, choosing to remove the barriers ourselves so that we can be

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<sup>13</sup> Addington, *Leading*, p. 51.

<sup>14</sup> Addington, *Leading*, pp. 76-77.

accessible to everyone with no discrimination or putting a fence around ourselves to keep people at a distance from us.

- Set time aside to pray together as a team to always make decisions through prayer and based on a set of organizational values or to make them hastily and individually without taking the values of the institution into account.
- Be slow to hire but fire quickly.
- Put God first in everything.
- To make to be rooted in the Word of God while making sure that scientific principles are in submission to the Word of God.
- Do periodical evaluation.
- Pay fair salaries.
- Create a family atmosphere while fostering discipline and productivity.
- Address issues amicably instead of going to court.
- Require that everyone is treated the same way, no matter the position of the individual.
- Choose to serve everyone according to when they arrived—first come first served.
- Be transparent at different levels in the system.
- Be intentional.

Everyone in the institution must know the guiding principles that influence their attitudes, decision-making, actions, and reactions. One of the guiding principles is the central ministry focus, which is the most important thing an institution needs to do regularly to accomplish its mission. Based on the requirements of the Great Commission and the output

and outcome, theological institutions must have their central ministry focus on making disciples and followers of Christ who make disciples.

#### Obedience-Based Instead of Content-Based Philosophy

Having a well-developed curriculum is one thing, but the orientation it is given in its implementation matters most. Jesus did not even have a written curriculum. Hence, theological institutions in Haiti must balance knowledge and obedient application. As we pursue academic excellence vigorously, we ought to remember that it should be a means to an end. Knowledge is necessary to apply, but people must not know just for the sake of knowing. Knowledge needs to be a step toward application. If knowledge is not applied, it is like it does not even exist. If theological institutions teach to change lives and provoke deep personal transformation of individuals, the balance must be found. Real transformation is tested and demonstrated in genuine application.

There is a tendency nowadays for people to be more into pursuing more degrees than to embrace field ministry for disciple-making passionately.<sup>15</sup> In the academic world, respect is based on what is in front of your name. If you have a Bachelor in Theology (BTH), you are not seen the same way as someone who has a Master in Theology (THM) is seen. That person with the THM can be less respected than someone with a DMIN, and that one less respected than someone with a Doctor of Philosophy (PHD) degree or with a Postdoctoral degree. This is one of the reasons why academics are valued more over Christian character in many circles. Once someone can demonstrate satisfactory knowledge, he or she gets a degree, while the person

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<sup>15</sup> Gupta and Lingenfelter, *Breaking*, pp. 17-18, 23.

may be far from being approved by God because of his or her character flaws. This is not arguing against theological education but points to the need for a balance between academic training, character development, and discipleship. When emphasizing Christian character, one never graduates if that person is in the flesh.

Theological institutions train or prepare students for the work of ministry. However, with the training, some become proud, others become too expensive for the churches they are invited to serve, and others want to stay in school to get higher degrees every time they complete one. It is not bad to have degrees, but when the emphasis is more on degrees than personal and spiritual development, it is a problem. Theological institutions must revisit the “teaching them to obey” part of the Great Commission, make sure that intentional disciple-making becomes the DNA of what they do, and find a way to take it to the churches directly while developing the new leaders with that DNA to impact the church indirectly.

### Measurements and Evaluation

Measurement is key in an institution or organization. Theological educators must be intentional in this area. If the institution does not measure, it will not know if it is going in the right direction so that necessary adjustments can be made.<sup>16</sup> This needs to be promoted as much as possible in institutions because of its significant value for success. Nevertheless, formal evaluation is not a strong value in Haitian culture. Haitians fear evaluation and tend to see

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<sup>16</sup> A key question asked by the practical theologian is: Is what appears to be going on within this situation what is actually going on? Practical theology approaches particular situations with a hermeneutics of suspicion, fully aware that, when the veil is pulled away, we often discover that what we think we are doing is quite different from what we are actually doing. Thus, through a process of critical reflection on situations, the practical theologian seeks to ensure faithful practice and authentic human living in the light of scripture and tradition. John Swinton, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research*. (Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd.) Kindle Edition.

evaluation as a threat to avoid. There is a need for a change of worldview here, and slow and small steps need to be taken to develop a culture of evaluation.

The following steps are recommended to support the movement toward evaluation.

1. Define what the institution wants to measure and explain why this is a positive thing for the institution.
2. Everyone on the team should know what will be measured beforehand so they can be prepared.
3. Explain that the measurements happen so the institution can improve and provide better results.
4. Point to the fact that it is not people being evaluated, but the ministry and its results.

Measurements can be qualitative and quantitative. In many cases, evaluation will ask students for honest feedback and testimonies. One can measure input—time in the Bible, time in certain books and materials, prayer time, for instance. The process can be measured—What comes first, and what is next? The results can be measured—transformation indicators can be listed and observed. If followed correctly, the above items will set the table for implementing a disciple-making focus.

## Implementation

The following items are offered concerning implementation.

1. A Written and Adapted Curriculum: At this point, the select group of stakeholders will develop a profile of the applicant to the theological institutions, meaning a list of items

that describe the applicant in every aspect for them to be clear about who the applicant is when he or she arrives. Then, they will develop a profile of the graduate, considering the Great Commission requirements and the dream of having the right output and outcome to arrive at a disciple-making HEC that will be able to make the desired impact on Haitian society. This has to do with who the graduate must be in terms of personal development and Christlikeness, ability to disciple others and to develop ministries with a focus on intentional and relational disciple-making based on his or her new understanding of the Great Commission, ability to study and to teach the truth in a very practical way to the glory of God, while taking into account the needs of the HEC to become a DMC to impact the Haitian society positively. This exercise will instruct the team to develop the written curriculum in such a way that it considers the profile of the applicant and the expected outcome, which requires the right atmosphere in the disciple-making culture. It must also consider the requirements of the accrediting entities and those of the state. The curriculum is everything between the two profiles, written and unwritten, that must happen in the process. That is why it is always necessary to discuss profiles first. The curriculum must be such that the applicant or student, having gone through it during the appropriate time, will come out as expected, with the right profile for the right outcome. Admittedly, since not every student will embrace the program in the same way, the results may vary. However, suppose the system is developed and implemented intentionally enough to produce a certain outcome. In that case, it is more likely to produce good results with only exceptions due to attitudes of the students toward the programs.

2. Internships: Internships are not done with the intentional disciple-making approach in mind. Disciple-making refers to a mentor having a follower following him or her so the follower can learn how to study the Word of God, how to submit to God and His Word, how to live according to the principles of the Word of God, how to respond to God and worship Him, and how to make disciples also her or himself. At STEP Seminary, internships are conceived so that, after their third year in the program, the students would spend at least six weeks or more in the field with a pastor who would mentor them. The staff approves the pastor. Then, the office, the intern, and the pastor sign a contract regarding the content of the internship. At the end, the pastor and the student submit evaluations of the experience to the office. The seminary discovered that, in many cases, the pastors are not present during the internship, although they signed the contracts. Many pastors take advantage of the presence of the intern to take vacations, sometimes overseas. In these cases, the students do many useful things because they gain experience, but they have no mentor mentoring them or no disciple-maker discipling them. It is worth mentioning that Jesus Christ was present with His 12 in the field for three and a half years. Disciple-making requires coaching in the field. This project recommends that the internship be a whole year in the field with a qualified mentor whom the student would follow to be discipled by him or her.

3. Spiritual Formation: Concerns about disciple-making led STEP to introduce Spiritual Formation into its curriculum. It is a 50-minute time every week during which the students are split into small groups of 10 to 12 with group leaders who lead discussions

and prayers. Spiritual formation has been implemented at STEP for about 20 years now, but evaluations show that students are not much different with Spiritual Formation than they were without it. Character flaws are still observed in the students, even with Spiritual Formation. The seminary realized that a 50-minute informal discussion and prayer in a small group format does not compensate for the shortage of disciple-making focus on the rest of the curriculum. The seminary graduates do not come out as true disciple-makers who would intentionally develop disciple-making churches.

The program faced many challenges as well in its implementation. Some faculty members who teach formal courses thought they were too busy to be involved with Spiritual Formation groups. STEP was obliged to hire recent graduates to lead most Spiritual Formation groups. Because the group leaders were students one or two years earlier, current students did not take them seriously. The behavior of the students demonstrated that the Spiritual Formation groups were looked down upon. When the groups met during the first hour, students would not come on time to participate. Attendance would be small. When they met during the last hour, many would not stay, especially after chapel on Mondays and Thursdays. Although Spiritual Formation is not problematic, its implementation has not developed a discipleship culture at STEP. Therefore, this is also one element that must be revisited considering the Great Commission. This project recommends modifying this semi-formal program because it is no longer a class but intentionally used by disciple-makers and disciples as guides.

### A Word of Caution

The most valuable asset for implementing a curriculum or program is the people. The team must remain motivated and focused<sup>17</sup> on the outcome and what is supposed to happen daily to get there. They must be determined to sacrifice, work hard in dependence on the Holy Spirit, remain on track, offer themselves as role models to the students, and guide them in their development. Any negligence in the process will cause the system to get off-track and slide back to where it was before. Creating a new culture is never easy because people naturally do what they used to do before. But, to do something different and better always requires strong intentionality, determination, encouragement, and positive evaluation. The leaders need to keep motivating the teams, encouraging them, celebrating small successes with them, and modeling for them so that the culture can be created.

### **Addressing the Obstacles at the Church Level**

The theological institutions must go back to the Great Commission to clarify meanings and discuss the application for the HEC, clarify what the church is according to the NT, address the issues with church traditions, and promote a discipleship model applicable in the Haitian context. The theological institutions must address their issues first and go through a change process to prepare intentional disciple-makers to develop the churches, which is the indirect aspect. However, having clarified the meanings and approaches, they must strategically and wisely communicate through seminars and workshops with key and open-minded leaders who

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<sup>17</sup> For this to happen, the leadership team must remind the team about it and encourage them by setting the tone. They have to take the lead and motivate the team to follow.

will be able to influence others serving with them in their circles of influence. Then, together with those key leaders, they must reach leadership teams of church associations and associations of pastors that will lead to leadership conferences.

The leadership conferences must wait until that time because otherwise, it would confuse the church. The strategy must be that the main leaders are targeted first. As they buy into the idea, the intermediaries—leadership teams of church associations and associations of pastors—will begin to be targeted with the help and participation of the main leaders. As this group is buying into the idea, the lower-level leaders—elders, deacons, and Sunday school teachers and group leaders in the local churches—will be targeted with the help and participation of the previous levels of leaders. This will create a multiplication process that will cause disciple-making to go faster and with possibilities for more lasting results, in the sense that leaders already influential in their circles will communicate and model the new ideas among their people.

#### **An Approach to Workshops: Creating a Favorable Atmosphere**

The following list of items has been developed to guide workshops with select groups of Haitian Evangelical leaders to bring them to a place where they become conscious of the need for change and be willing to go through the process of creating a new culture, a culture of disciple-making in the HEC.

1. Gather a select group of influential leaders from different denominations in the HEC and theological schools. Make sure they get to know each other enough to feel free to be vulnerable.

2. Invite the leaders to spend a little time talking among themselves in small groups of five to six about the current state of Haiti.
3. Invite the leaders to talk among themselves in small groups of five to six about the current state of the HEC in Haiti.
4. Invite the leaders to share thoughts about the role of the church as salt and light in society and how well they think the church has been doing to positively impact Haitian society, in small groups.
5. Ask the leaders whether they have thought about these issues before. What do they think seems to be the problem? What has gone wrong? Do they think the Church could have done better, and why?
6. Ask the leaders to discuss the essence of the Great Commission. How well do you think the HEC has fulfilled the Great Commission?
7. Ask the leaders to discuss the definition of church considering the Great Commission in their small groups.
8. Ask the leaders to describe what a church would look like according to their crafted definition. Is this possible in the Haitian context?
9. Do Haitian Christian leaders have the option not to develop that kind of church but to develop something that might be easier for them?
10. Where should we begin if Haitian Christian leaders do not have the option not to do it?

The last question on the above list will open the door to addressing the obstacles keeping the HEC from becoming a fully and effective DMC at the church level now. Having wrestled with the above questions in small groups, the select group of influential church and

theological school leaders will begin to react to the ideas. The theological institutions will be weeding out those who show signs of their unwillingness to go further in the discussions and pulling together those who desire to go further for the following workshops.

Two sets of contents are to be considered for the workshops. The first set is constituted of the same process of change above that the theological institutions went through, with nuances to make it fit the church with its particularities instead of the theological schools. The second set consists of definitions and meanings of key biblical and theological items related to developing a disciple-making culture. This second set is found in Appendix B of this thesis-project.

The researcher recommends that the above process be taken seriously and tried, for it can potentially trigger a change process in the HEC. A study can be conducted later on to find out to what extent the training of a pastor has shaped his or her ministry philosophy to provoke positive change.

Another research could be to study different groups of pastors, graduates of different theological institutions, their philosophies of ministry, and their outcomes to compare them. Also, a study would determine the durable impact of an effective DMC in Haiti.

### **The Question for this Thesis-Project**

The question for this thesis-project was: What are the obstacles keeping the HEC from becoming a fully and effective DMC? In Chapter 1, the context of the problem was considered by looking at the current reality of Haiti and the HEC through its 200 years of existence in the country and the shortage of disciple-making in the HEC. Chapter 2 addressed the theological

foundation of disciple-making both in the OT and the NT, focusing on the discipleship model of Jesus and the discipleship model of the apostle Paul. In Chapter 3, the researcher considered a set of publications about discipleship whose authors have something of great value to say that can contribute to the solutions to the question. In Chapter 4, the researcher presented the result of a series of interviews conducted with key pastors and Evangelical leaders in the HEC across several denominations, ranks, and levels of influence. Chapter 5 considered the discoveries of the search and provided elements of solutions to the problem.

First of all, the theological institutions preparing pastors for the HEC must evaluate themselves and embark on a change process. A list of guidelines is offered for that. Second, having gone through the process, the theological institutions will come alongside key church and denomination leaders to help them go through an evaluation and a process of change while clarifying some key items related to a culture of disciple-making.

## Conclusion

In Conclusion, the goal of this project has been to bring the HEC to a place where it becomes a fully and effective DMC, according to the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 by addressing the obstacles that are keeping it from becoming such. If that happens, the HEC will become an entity where everyone will be discipling someone. Everyone will have a Barnabas, who will be investing in him, and a Timothy, in whom they will be investing. It will become a network of disciples striving toward the same goal, Christlikeness. The characteristics of that church would allow it to have a positive impact on the whole society. We are talking about a church that has been operating with a different philosophy for about 200 years, meaning that a

very long tradition has been developed over time, which was not in full alignment with the Great Commission.

We have learned that people do not easily abandon traditions they are very used to. Thus, to attain the goal, the researcher has offered an approach that must begin with the theological institutions in Haiti. Once the theological institutions address the issue, they can do two things. One is that they can start developing church leaders focusing on disciple-making.

Those leaders will develop churches the only way they know how. Second, through their leaders, they can work with existing churches to help them address the obstacles in front of them so that the HEC can become a fully and effective disciple-making Church to impact Haitian society positively.

APPENDIX A  
INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

THE 5 THEMES FOR CHAPTER 3 THAT ARE REFLECTED IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE ARE:

- 1) A church that makes converts instead of actually making disciples.
- 2) A church that indoctrinates instead of teaching people to obey the commandments of Christ.
- 3) A church that places more emphasis on activities than on results.
- 4) A church that is more interested in the great crowd than in the development of the individual believer toward maturity.
- 5) A church that is characterized by curricula and programs to cover instead of intentional relationships fostering discipleship that makes disciples.

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE**

THE OBSTACLES THAT PREVENT THE HAITIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH FROM BECOMING A CHURCH THAT MAKES DISCIPLES.

1. How do you understand the phrase “make disciples of all nations” in the Great Commission?
2. Why would you say that the Haitian Evangelical Church has made disciples or that it has simply made converts?
3. How do you understand the phrase “Teach them to observe” in the Great Commission?
4. Would you be more inclined to say that the Haitian Evangelical Church taught believers to obey or that it rather engaged in indoctrination? For what?

5. To what extent are you satisfied with the work of the Haitian Evangelical Church in the area of training disciples of Christ who can validly serve as salt and light in society?
6. Are there any obstacles to this work that you notice? Could you name two or three?
7. How comfortable would you be with the idea that the Haitian Evangelical Church is concerned with the development of each individual believer towards maturity, instead of the development of a large number of local churches even when the spiritual level of these churches would be low?
8. What, in your opinion, prevents the Haitian Evangelical Church from working to bring each believer to spiritual maturity?
9. How do you evaluate these two approaches in relation to the Great Commission: One that places more emphasis on intentional relationships fostering the influence of one life on another like Moses and Joshua, Christ and his disciples, Paul and Timothy, and another that puts more emphasis on curricula and programs to see?
10. In your opinion, which of these two approaches most characterizes the Haitian Evangelical Church and what do you think?

## APPENDIX B

### EVALUATIONS OF THE HAITIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

#### TRADITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Haitian Evangelical Church is characterized by activities that, for the most part, have no clear purposes concerning Christian maturity. The activities are many and are being done as routine activities that protestant churches usually do, like evangelistic conferences, water baptism, the Lord's table, membership class, youth meetings, camps and retreats, Vacation Bible School, prayer meetings, fasting sessions, children dedications, children's ministry (Sunday school, worship), boy's Brigade, choirs, bands, men's groups, women's groups, home visitations, deaconry, Bible classes in Christian schools, Bible classes in secular schools, prison ministry. The list is not exhaustive. All those activities are going on in the life of the Haitian Evangelical Church; however, in some cases, leaders of those activities are not showing enough maturity in their own lives. Disciple-making principles are not part of what is happening with those activities. Therefore, many people gather who are attracted by one or another of those activities but are unfortunately not discipled. Some activities involve many people who gather together according to set schedules. Others attract a smaller number of people. Since the culture values numbers, it is considered successful when many people gather for a certain activity. However, even people who regularly attend those activities can remain immature. They, unfortunately, are not crafted in such a way that believers participating in them would grow to maturity. Because those activities have been a part of the life of the Church for a long time, they are accepted and even defended by church members and leaders. They have become the traditions held by the Haitian Evangelical Church. One must admit that this

tradition of the Haitian Evangelical Church is not all bad because it has impacted Haitian society to a certain extent. Believers tend to obey the law, pay taxes, and respect authority, just to name a few. However, effective disciple-making that can produce fully mature Christians who could transform Haitian society requires more intentionality about both the process and the goal.

Anyone who has been part of a local church for some time will know the routine there. That person can behave like everybody else in any circumstances. Christian leaders can get anything they want from them as far as behavior. Congregants who attend activities simply need to know the leader's expectations. Once they know the leader's expectations, they can perform for the leader. But the leader has no guarantee about their hearts. For lack of time and space, the researcher will look at only three activities in more detail, the Sunday worship service, Sunday school, and evangelism, to show how these three can be approached to ensure a good disciple-making process.

a. *Sunday Worship*

1) The Problem

Sunday worship is the most important gathering in the minds of believers in the Haitian Evangelical Church. Most believers only attend church on Sundays, as they don't think the weekday activities are all that important. Gathering one-third of local church attendants for any weekday activity, including Bible study and prayer meetings, is hard. Sunday worship services in the Haitian Evangelical Church are viewed as one of two things. In many cases, it is viewed as something that must be crafted in such a way that

the people in the pews will like it so that they can be motivated to come back. People in the pews tend to view the activities happening on the podium on Sunday mornings, like the prayers, the readings, and the preaching, as performances for them to evaluate instead of participatory activity. A Baptist pastor once told me that the church he pastors is just a few yards from a Pentecostal church on the same street. A large group of his people go to the Pentecostal church next door for the songs, where they mostly give their offerings. Still, they switched again right before he started preaching his sermons because they liked his preaching but preferred the music. In other cases, it is viewed and treated as a transaction with God. "I come to worship you so you can bless me in return." Those regrettable attitudes towards worship are the results of the teaching and preaching of some church leaders.

## 2) Proposed solution

In the New Testament, the Greek word translated as "worship" is *proskuneo* meaning "to prostrate before," "to fall down before," or "to bow down before". It refers to the attitude of the heart of the worshiper toward God, regardless of place.<sup>1</sup> It carries the idea of expressing profound respect and appreciation to God for who He is. God always deserves our worship, so there is no set time either. It must be every day, every hour, every minute. So people must gather to respectfully worship God because of who He is and what He has done. The place of worship is where people must come with a spirit of submission and in awe before the Lord. It is honoring God, the only one who deserves to be honored. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that God is Spirit ... John

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<sup>1</sup> cf. John 4:21.

4:24. Worshiping God in Spirit has nothing to do with the physical part of the believer.

Instead, the believers respond to God in worship in his innermost being under the influence of the Holy Spirit who dwells in the believer. When people gather together at a place of worship, the focus is not on the place or the crowd that gathers but on the heart and mind of every believer responding to God in worship individually.

God deserves our worship no matter what. The Book of Job is a wonderful illustration of that idea. Satan thought that Job was worshiping God for what God had done for him, but God knew that Job worshiped Him for who He was, and circumstances do not change God. Adverse circumstances of a worshiper do not make God undeserving of the worship. As the Creator of all things, as the one who created us and provided all the things we have available to us, as the Sovereign Lord of the universe, God always deserves our worship

*b. Sunday School*

1) The problem

Traditionally, Sunday School in the Haitian Evangelical Church meets for an hour every Sunday before or after the worship service. Sometimes, it meets between the first and the second worship services. When squeezed between the two services, it is even more difficult to do what was set to be done. It is called Sunday school because it meets on Sundays. That is fine, but it is also wrongly called school, and it meets for only one hour every Sunday. The learning is taken lightly. The actual teaching is usually for about 30 minutes. The first 30 minutes are for preliminaries: 1) Wait until a reasonable

number of students finally arrive. People come late to Sunday school without coercion, formal cognitive or affective, or behavioral evaluation. 2) Counting the number of students present, the Bible in the class, the songbooks, the visitors, the offerings, etc., takes some time. Banners (some kind of trophies) are awarded at the end when all the classes meet in the worship service area for closure, and all that, during the same hour. 3) In many cases, the teachers have no biblical training. 4) Everything is done during the hour, and that is it. In general, no homework is given to the students. In fact, in most cases, when the students return the following Sunday, they don't even remember what was said the Sunday before. 5) Many don't come every Sunday. 6) Even though some applications may be discussed, there is no follow-up to ensure people apply. In a discipleship process, applications would be discussed in an appropriate atmosphere and modeled and encouraged to apply along with evaluation.

## 2) A Proposed Solution

First of all, **the name** must be changed. Instead of Sunday school, it may be better to develop discipleship groups. Disciples of Christ in a local church are organized in small groups of not more than ten people with a teacher/ disciple-maker to guide them. With that format, they will be able to get to know each other and intentionally develop friendships and interdependence to foster everyone's development. When it comes to maturity in Christ, God's desire is not for some but for "all to become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."<sup>2</sup> A network of disciple makers

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<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 4:13.

and disciples must be envisioned with Christlikeness in mind, instructing different strategies than those of the traditional Sunday school.

**Time-** Just as physical babies need a lot of attention and care until they are grown and become mature enough to survive in society, born-again Christians need attention and care during an appropriate period until they become mature enough to reproduce. Paul told the Corinthians that he was their spiritual father who presented them with the gospel. He knew that he had a father-children relationship with them. In that logic, time with disciples to develop them will depend on how fast or slow they grow to maturity. Jesus spent three and a half years developing his twelve. Once a week meeting does not work. Therefore, discipleship groups must find ways to be together as frequently as possible during the week and on Sundays for at least three to four years. Remember that intentional disciple-making happens in relationships and through time.

**Content-** Instead of picking up a few stories here and there from the Bible and a few doctrines to develop Sunday school lessons that do not go very far, the content must be the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). The Bible is God's revelation to His people. It is abnormal to work with just a little bit of it and neglect the rest. That would be like receiving a long letter from your father about important matters, and you choose to read a few paragraphs from it and put it down. A well-established program that can help people know and live by the word of God must be crafted for the discipleship groups to be implemented with a good coordination system in the local church. Every believer needs to know the word of God well and be able to apply it. Knowing the word of God should not be only for professionals who go to seminaries and have seminary

degrees. Those who go to seminaries and have degrees must know even more in-depth so they can explain the word of God and guide people into applying it. While offering themselves as models to follow, with more ease than others, Theologians must teach the basics to the believers who must master them as they are involved in discipleship groups that apply the obedience-based curriculum well. Everyone desires transformation, but transformation does not happen outside of the obedience-based curriculum.

**Approach-** The teachers must have been discipled and must have basic training<sup>3</sup> in the Bible to be able to teach facts and to model the applications for the students. For each lesson taught, the goal must not be simply cognitive. The teacher must make sure that the lessons are understood well. Then they need to discuss the possible applications in all aspects of life and ensure follow-up together and in the lives of individual disciples, as he or she offers himself or herself as a good model to follow.<sup>4</sup>

The goal of Christian development is maturity in Christ, and the mature disciples will make disciples of Christ who will also resemble Him. This means that the learner will be learning about the life of Christ and His character through the life of his or her teacher so that he or she can live like Him. In the same way, someone who is not schooled will not be put in front of students in a classroom, to be a good disciple-maker,

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<sup>3</sup> The Sunday school teachers should at least go through a program like the “theological education by extension” program of the Union Evangelique Baptiste d’Haiti. A 24 courses developed to provide some tools for lay leaders in ministry. This program includes Bible study methods, surveys on all 66 books of the Bible, the beginning and the development of the Christian life, the Christian home, a course on Homiletics, church leadership, and religions. This semi-formal program is usually taught on Saturdays to attract leaders and potential leaders who may be too busy during weekdays.

<sup>4</sup> cf. 1 Timothy 4:12

one has to know God and His word. But teaching to obey goes further than that. It goes into application, meaning that the disciple-makers need to obey God's word in their own lives to allow the student disciple, the apprentice, to learn to do the same by watching and participating in the reality of the life of the master. Knowing has some value, but it does not do any good if we don't apply what we know. Our teaching methods should be revisited so that we can be sure to go past the level of theory. The disciples must enjoy genuine relationships with the master that will allow them to learn by experiencing life and ministry with the master. God is looking for application.<sup>5</sup>

c. *Evangelism*

Evangelism is something every local church talks about and does according to their understanding of the Great Commission. In general, at the time of a new church plant, the leader and his team will embark on aggressive door-to-door outreach, evangelistic crusades, and home Bible study with an emphasis on evangelism. People are encouraged to bring visitors whom the leaders target because they want them to decide to receive Christ in their lives. That dynamic goes on until a crowd is formed, and whatever facility they have is full. Once the facility is full, the strategy often changes. No more door-to-door, no more evangelistic crusades, no more home Bible study, people are no longer encouraged to bring visitors, and the visitors are not targeted. The only way the church continues to grow numerically is through newborn babies in the church family. It is as if the lost people in the neighborhood did not exist. The church members

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<sup>5</sup> cf. Deuteronomy 6:1-3; Psalm 119:4.

don't mind passing them by on Sundays as they go to the church building for worship. If someone else does not decide to come to the area to plant a new church, the lost people in the area may never be reached, or if by chance they are told about the love of Christ and they make a decision, they are also told to find a Bible teaching church to attend. Follow-up is on them. Besides doubts one can always have concerning a true salvation experience in those cases, if they don't follow up at all, they are in the crowd somewhere.

When an established church talks about evangelism, it is envisioned for people in the next town or another city far away that requires travel for several hours. Then they return to the base and never return to that place. The same approach to tell those who accept to pray to receive Christ to find a Bible-teaching church to attend is usually taken, or depending on the number of people who make decisions, they may decide to plant a new church that will begin to suffer from the lack of leadership on site and the occasional visits of someone from the mother church that is located many miles away.

A simple solution to this problem is intentional disciple-making, according to the Great Commission. The "go" command has been emphasized for a long time. Just going and telling is not enough. Disciple-making is what is commanded, and when the response is proportional to the command, disciple-making is what happens. When disciple-making happens, long-term relationships are created with a purpose, which is Christlikeness and the possibility to move forward with the work as the disciples will become like their master when they are fully grown.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Luke 6:40.

## Clarifying Who a Pastor/Disciple Maker Is According to the New Testament

Discipleship will only work if the disciple-maker is a model worth following. As it was seen in chapter 3, the words used in the New Testament to refer to the pastor carry the idea of overseeing as a shepherd, with the understanding of the shepherd in Psalm 23 who takes responsibility for every aspect of the life of the sheep. God uses the imagery of a shepherd to talk about pastors and the imagery of a flock of sheep to talk about the church for good reasons. It refers to how the ministry of a pastor should be embraced concerning the flock. It points to great special care, which requires availability and patience. Proximity is also very key in that kind of ministry. Dependence on God for provision on the pastor's part is very important as the task is beyond human ability. The way the pastor approaches God, who calls and appoints him, the way he accomplishes his task, and his attitude when he faces challenges in the ministry is very important because he needs to be teaching by example. This kind of imagery is used to refer mostly to the pastor's work, but because of how God views it, other considerations have to be made here.

### a. The Calling

The work envisioned by God for a pastor toward the believers is so complex that someone has to make sure about his calling from God for such a task before taking it upon himself. And even then, he will have to rely on the support of the Holy Spirit to

actually, deliver. The one God calls, He empowers him with spiritual gifts of pastor and teacher and gives him as a gift to the church for its edification.<sup>7</sup>

b. The Qualifications

God intends for the overseer to be qualified spiritually, academically, socially, enjoying good relationships with his wife and children, and having a good reputation.<sup>8</sup> Someone might like the pastoral role but not be qualified for it. The overseer's qualifications must be considered carefully in the church. People may be tempted to force themselves into the pastoral position, or others may decide to put someone in the position for different reasons, but that would be harmful both for that "pastor" and the church he is supposed to shepherd because of what shepherding implies. Among other things, the pastor must be a model for the church so that God will be glorified.

c. The Consecration

When God wants to establish a man as a pastor in Christ's Church, He calls him and sets him apart for the work because a shepherd has to be available for the sheep. Disciple-making requires time to spend with the disciple, but a pastor/shepherd who focuses on disciple-making will need even more time to lead and shepherd the church. Consecration to the work of God based on His calling is in the DNA of the church. When Jesus called His disciples to follow Him, they left their nets and dedicated their lives to Him and the ministry to which He called them later. For Paul, it was the same thing. He answered the call and dedicated his life to doing the work. Changing that approach has

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<sup>7</sup> cf. Ephesians 4:11-13.

<sup>8</sup> cf. 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9.

already affected the results. We end up with pastors who are not mature and spiritually weak churches that cannot impact society.

d. The Task

The work of a pastor is to shepherd the flock, which means taking responsibility for caring for the flock, every single sheep. The pastor is the one whom God has gifted to feed the believers spiritually, to quench their thirst, to protect them, to guide them, to lead them, to defend them, to instruct them, to fellowship with them, to model faith, love, humility, a spirit of service, holiness, fear of God, for them. This kind of work requires a lot of time but also proximity. It is impossible to do this work from a distance or ask other people to fill in for you. The pastor has to be available for his flock and embrace the ministry with both hands for it to be successful.

e. God's Provision

It is paradoxical when pastors refuse to stick to the work God has called them to because they worry about caring for themselves and their families while preaching to the church that God is able, He is Jehovah Jireh, He is faithful to His promises, and so on. If the pastor cannot trust God, who has appointed him to shepherd the flock for His provision, how can he be a model for those in that area? The churches are not shepherded because the pastors are away working other full-time jobs, in many cases, to take care of their families. The solution to that problem is not simple because a tradition has already been developed, but it is possible to solve it. It begins with faith on the part of a truly called pastor, who, as an under-shepherd who wants to honor Christ,

takes time to shepherd the flock, teaching them to obey the word of God in practical life by modeling it for them in the process of disciple-making. For the word of God says, “The one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor.”<sup>9</sup> In his first letter to Timothy, Paul wrote, “The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.”<sup>10</sup> In the next verse, he quotes a passage from the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 25:4, and one of Jesus’ teachings out of the Gospel of Luke (Luke 10:7), to support his point: “For Scripture says, ‘Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,’ and ‘The worker deserves his wages.’<sup>11</sup> If the church is discipled in that way, God will provide for the pastor through the church. But, if the pastor keeps expecting the church to respond the right way without him taking responsibility to do the work right, it will continue to be a deception for both the pastor and the church. They complain about not seeing him much because he is not playing his role, and he complains about not being compensated enough by the church.

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<sup>9</sup> Galatians 6:6.

<sup>10</sup> 1 Timothy 5:17.

<sup>11</sup> 1 Timothy 5:18.

APPENDIX C  
DOCUMENT DE CONSENTEMENT INFORMÉ

**Titre du projet:** Les obstacles qui empêchent à l'Église Évangélique Haïtienne de devenir une Église qui fait réellement des disciples

**Chercheur:** Wadestrant Jean-Baptiste,  
Programme de Doctorat en Ministère,  
Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary

**OBJECTIF**

Ceci est un projet de recherche qui nécessite une enquête. Le but de ce projet est de contribuer à améliorer l'impact de l'Église Évangélique Haïtienne dans la société en identifiant les obstacles qui empêchent à cette Église de devenir une Église qui fait réellement des disciples de façon intentionnelle. Le présent formulaire de consentement a pour but de vous fournir les informations dont vous aurez besoin pour vous aider à décider si vous souhaitez participer à cette enquête ou non. Vous pouvez poser des questions sur l'enquête, sur ce que l'on vous demandera de faire, sur les risques et avantages éventuels, sur vos droits en tant que bénévole, sur tout ce qui concerne l'enquête ou sur n'importe quoi dans ce formulaire qui ne serait pas clair.

Nous vous invitons à participer à ce projet de recherche parce que vous êtes un (e) croyant (e) évangélique convaincu (e), un leader influent dans le monde évangélique, une personne avisée et ayant un esprit d'ouverture vous permettant de jeter un regard critique sur la réalité.

**PROCÉDURES**

Si vous acceptez de participer à l'enquête, votre participation sera de répondre, dans une entrevue avec le chercheur, à une dizaine de questions concernant les obstacles qui empêchent à l'Église Évangélique Haïtienne de devenir une Église qui fait réellement des disciples de façon intentionnelle. Les questions ne vous concernent pas personnellement. Elles concernent de préférence la réalité de l'Église Évangélique Haïtienne en général, ses approches par rapport à la Grande Commission, son niveau d'engagement dans la formation de disciples et son impact sur la société. La durée de l'entrevue sera d'environ une heure de temps.

## DES RISQUES

Il n'y a pas vraiment de risque prévisible associé à votre participation à cette enquête. Car, malgré le fait que le chercheur aura besoin d'enregistrer l'interview, votre nom ne sera pas utilisé, ni dans la conversation ni dans le rapport de l'étude ou ailleurs. La lettre « P » sera utilisée avec un chiffre pour distinguer parmi les participants. Par exemple, P1 sera utilisé pour participant 1, P2 pour participant 2 et ainsi de suite. En plus, les enregistrements seront gardés sous contrôle dans un endroit sécurisé.

## AVANTAGES

Franchement, il n'y a aucun avantage personnel à participer à cette enquête, mais nous prévoyons que, dans l'avenir, la société pourra en tirer parti. Car, à la fin de ce projet, les résultats seront utilisés pour développer des leçons à partager dans des séminaires de formation de leaders d'église à différents niveaux ou dans la formation d'étudiants au niveau des écoles bibliques et séminaires. De plus, cette recherche a le potentiel de fournir des éléments de solution pouvant améliorer la condition de l'Église Évangélique Haïtienne qui elle-même pourra mieux influencer la société, à la gloire de Dieu ; et vous aurez la satisfaction de savoir que vous avez aussi votre touche dans tout ça pour avoir participé à cette enquête, même si c'est dans l'anonymat.

## COMPENSATION

Vous ne serez pas rémunéré (e) pour votre participation à ce projet de recherche. Comme le chercheur avait déjà dit plus haut, si vous participez, vous aurez la satisfaction d'avoir contribué à la formation de leaders évangéliques dans le pays en vue d'améliorer l'impact de l'Église Évangélique Haïtienne sur la société en général.

## CONFIDENTIALITÉ

Les dossiers de participation à cette enquête resteront confidentiels. Rappelez-vous que votre vrai nom ne sera jamais utilisé ou associé à l'enregistrement. Ce dernier sera identifié avec la lettre « P » accompagnée d'un chiffre 1, 2, ou 3 et ainsi de suite, faisant référence au participant 1, participant 2, participant 9, etc. Il y aura 10 enregistrements pour 10 interviews et le tout sera traité en toute confidentialité et gardé sous contrôle dans un endroit sécurisé. Vous avez la garantie qu'en cas de rapport ou de publication de cette recherche, votre identité

ne sera pas divulguée. Les résultats seront rapportés en résumé et en groupe, de sorte que vous ne puissiez pas être identifié.

### PARTICIPATION VOLONTAIRE

Participer à cette enquête est volontaire. Vous pouvez choisir de ne pas participer du tout. Si vous décidez de ne pas y prendre part, votre décision n'entraînera aucune pénalité ni perte d'avantages auxquels vous pourriez par ailleurs avoir droit. Même après avoir signé ce document, vous pourrez toujours choisir de mettre fin à votre participation même à mi-chemin, au cours de l'interview. Dans un tel cas, la partie de l'interview qui aura été déjà enregistrée serait détruite en votre présence, à moins que vous accorderiez la permission au chercheur de l'utiliser quand même dans son projet.

### DES QUESTIONS

Les questions sont encouragées. Si vous avez des questions sur ce projet de recherche, veuillez contacter: Wadestrant Jean-Baptiste par téléphone au 4306-9907 ou par courrier électronique à [jbwadestrant@gmail.com](mailto:jbwadestrant@gmail.com). Si vous avez des questions sur vos droits en tant que participant, veuillez contacter le co-président du Conseil d'évaluation, David A. Currie, à l'adresse suivante: [dcurrie@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:dcurrie@gordonconwell.edu); 978-646-4176

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Votre signature indique que ce projet de recherche vous a été expliquée, que vos questions ont reçu une réponse et que vous acceptez de participer à cette étude. Vous recevrez une copie de ce formulaire.

Nom du participant (En lettres détachées):

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(Signature du participant)

(Date)

### DÉCLARATION DU CHERCHEUR

J'ai discuté des points ci-dessus avec le participant. À mon avis, le participant comprend les risques, les avantages et les procédures inhérents à la participation à ce projet de recherche.

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(Signature du chercheur)

(Date)

## APPENDIX D

### INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT (ENGLISH)

**Title of the project:** THE PROBLEMATIC OF DISCIPLE-MAKING  
IN THE HAITIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

**Chercheur:** Wadestrant Jean-Baptiste,  
Doctor in Ministry Program,  
Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary

#### OBJECTIVE

This is a research project that requires investigation. This project aims to help improve the impact of the Haitian Evangelical Church in society by identifying the obstacles that prevent this Church from becoming a Church that genuinely and intentionally makes disciples. This consent form is intended to provide you with the information you will need to help you decide whether or not you wish to participate in this survey. You can ask questions about the survey, what you will be asked to do, possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, anything about the survey, or anything in this form that would not be clear.

We invite you to participate in this research project because you are a convinced evangelical believer, an influential leader in the evangelical world, and a wise person with an open mind that allows you to throw a critical look at reality.

#### PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in the survey, your participation will be to answer, in an interview with the researcher, about ten questions concerning the obstacles that prevent the Haitian Evangelical Church from becoming a Church that truly makes disciples in a way intentional. The questions do not concern you personally. They are preferably concerned with the reality of the Haitian Evangelical Church in general, its approaches to the Great Commission, its level of commitment to discipleship, and its impact on society. The duration of the interview will be approximately one hour.

## RISKS

There is no real foreseeable risk associated with your participation in this survey. Although the researcher will need to record the interview, your name will not be used in the conversation, the report, or elsewhere. The letter "P" will be used with a number to distinguish among participants. For example, P1 will be used for participant 1, P2 for participant 2, etc. In addition, the recordings will be controlled in a secure location.

## BENEFITS

Frankly, there is no personal benefit to participating in this survey, but we anticipate that in the future, society may benefit from it. At the end of this project, the results will be used to develop lessons to share in training seminars for church leaders at different levels or in the training of students at the level of Bible schools and seminaries. Furthermore, this research has the potential to provide elements of a solution that can improve the condition of the Haitian Evangelical Church, which will influence society to the glory of God better. You will be satisfied knowing that you also have your touch in all of this for participating in this survey, even if it is anonymous.

## COMPENSATION

You will not be paid for your participation in this research project. As the researcher had already said above, if you participate, you will have the satisfaction of having contributed to the training of evangelical leaders in the country to improve the impact of the Haitian Evangelical Church on society in general.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The files for participation in this survey will remain confidential. Remember that your real name will never be used or associated with the registration. The latter will be identified with the letter "P" accompanied by a number 1, 2, or 9, referring to Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 9, etc. There will be 10 recordings for 10 interviews, and everything will be treated confidentially and kept under control in a secure location. You are guaranteed that your identity will not be disclosed if this research is reported or published. The results will be reported in summary and groups so you cannot be identified.

## VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participating in this survey is voluntary. You can choose not to participate at all. If you decide not to participate, your decision will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you may otherwise be entitled. Even after signing this document, you can still end your participation halfway through the interview. In such a case, the part of the interview that has already been recorded will be destroyed in your presence unless you grant permission to the researcher to use it in their project.

## QUESTIONS

Questions are encouraged. If you have any questions about this research project, please contact Wadestrant Jean-Baptiste by telephone at 4306-9907 or by email at [jbwadestrant@gmail.com](mailto:jbwadestrant@gmail.com). If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, please contact Review Council Co-Chair David A. Currie at [dcurrie@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:dcurrie@gordonconwell.edu); 978-646-4176

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Your signature indicates that this research project has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to participate in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Name of participant (in capital letters):

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(Participant's Signature)

(Date)

## RESEARCHER'S STATEMENT

I discussed the above points with the participant. The participant understands the risks, benefits, and procedures inherent in participating in this research project.

(Researcher's Signature)

(Date)

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### Education

- Bachelor of Theology (BTh, May 1997)—Séminaire de Théologie Evangélique de Port-au-Prince (STEP)
- Master of Theology: Concentration in Academic Ministries, Old Testament (ThM, May 2002)—Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS)
- Doctor of Ministry: Concentration in Pastoral Skills (DMin projected for May 2024)—Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (GCTS)

### Involvement in Ministry

- Professor of Bible and Theology at Séminaire de Théologie Evangélique de Port-au-Prince (STEP) since 2002
- President of Séminaire de Théologie Evangélique de Port-au-Prince (STEP) since 2013